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CAPTAIN SPIKE;

OR,

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THE ISLETS OF THE GULF.

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BY

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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CAPTAIN SPIKE;

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THE ISLETS OF THE GULF.

CHAPTER I.

"Ay, now I am in Arden; the more fool
I; when I was at home I was in a better place; but
Travellers must be content. *As You Like it.*

"*Pros.* Why, that's my spirit!
But was not this nigh shore?
Ariel. Close by, my master.
Pros. But are they, Ariel, safe?
Ariel. Not a hair perished." *Tempest.*

"D'YE hear there, Mr. Mulford?" called out Captain Stephen Spike, of the half-rigged brigantine Swash, or Molly Swash, as was her registered name, to his mate—"we shall be dropping out as soon as the tide makes, and I intend to get through the Gate, at least, on the next flood. Waiting for a wind in port is lub-

berly seamanship, for he that wants one should go outside and look for it."

This call was uttered from a wharf of the renowned city of Manhattan, to one who was in the trunk-cabin of a clipper-looking craft, of the name mentioned, and on the deck of which not a soul was visible. Nor was the wharf, though one of those wooden piers that line the arm of the sea that is called the East River, such a spot as ordinarily presents itself to the mind of the reader, or listener, when an allusion is made to a wharf of that town which it is the fashion of the times to call the *Commercial* Emporium of America—as if there might very well be an *emporium* of any other character. The wharf in question had not a single vessel of any sort lying at, or indeed very near it, with the exception of the Molly Swash. As it actually stood on the eastern side of the town, it is scarcely necessary to say that such a wharf could only be found high up, and at a considerable distance from the usual haunts of commerce. The brig lay more than a mile above the Hook (Corlaer's, of course, is meant —not Sandy Hook), and quite near to the old

Alms House—far above the ship yards, in fact. It was a solitary place for a vessel, in the midst of a crowd. The grum, top-chain voice of Captain Spike had nothing there to mingle with, or interrupt its harsh tones, and it instantly brought on deck Harry Mulford, the mate in question, apparently eager to receive his orders.

"Did you hail, Captain Spike?" called out the mate, a tight, well-grown, straight-built, handsome sailor-lad of two or three-and-twenty —one full of health, strength, and manliness.

"Hail! If you call straining a man's throat until he's hoarse, hailing, I believe I did. I flatter myself there is not a man north of Hatteras that can make himself heard further in a gale of wind than a certain gentleman who is to be found within a foot of the spot where I stand. Yet, sir, I've been hailing the Swash these five minutes, and thankful am I to find some one at last who is on board to answer me."

"What are your orders, Captain Spike?"

"To see all clear for a start as soon as the flood makes. I shall go through the Gate on

the next young flood, and I hope you'll have all the hands aboard in time. I see two or three of them up at that Dutch beer-house this moment, and can tell 'em, in plain language, if they come here with their beer aboard *them*, they'll have to go ashore again."

"You have an uncommonly sober crew, Captain Spike," answered the young man, with great calmness. "During the whole time I have been with them, I have not seen a man among them the least in the wind."

"Well, I hope it will turn out that I've an uncommonly sober mate in the bargain. Drunkenness I abominate, Mr. Mulford, and I can tell you, short metre, that I will not stand it."

"May I inquire if you ever saw me, the least in the world, under the influence of liquor, Captain Spike?" *demanded* the mate, rather than asked, with a very fixed meaning in his manner.

"I keep no log-book of trifles, Mr. Mulford, and cannot say. No man is the worse for bowsing out his jib when off duty, though a

drunkard's a thing I despise. Well, well—remember, sir, that the Molly Swash casts off on the young flood, and that Rose Budd and the good lady, her aunt, take passage in her, this v'y'ge."

"Is it possible that you have persuaded them into that at last!" exclaimed the handsome mate.

"Persuaded! It takes no great persuasion, sir, to get the ladies to try their luck in that brig. Lady Washington herself, if she was alive and disposed to a sea-v'y'ge, might be glad of the chance. We 've a ladies' cabin, you know, and it's suitable that it should have some one to occupy it. Old Mrs. Budd is a sensible woman, and takes time by the forelock. Rose is ailin'—pulmonary, they call it, I believe, and her aunt wishes to try the sea for her constitution—"

"Rose Budd has no more of a pulmonary constitution than I have myself," interrupted the mate.

"Well, that's as people fancy. You must know, Mr. Mulford, they 've got all sorts of diseases now-a-days, and all sorts of cures for

'em. One sort of a cure for consumption is what they tarm Hyder-Ally—"

"I think you must mean hydropathy, sir—"

"Well, it's something of the sort, no matter what—but cold water is at the bottom of it, and they *do* say it's a good remedy. Now Rose's aunt thinks if cold water is what is wanted, there is no place where it can be so plenty as out on the ocean. Sea-air is good, too, and by taking a v'y'ge her niece will get both requisites together, and cheap."

"Does Rose Budd think herself consumptive, Captain Spike?" asked Mulford, with interest.

"Not she—you know it will never do to alarm a pulmonary, so Mrs. Budd has held her tongue carefully on the subject before the young woman. Rose fancies that her *aunt* is out of sorts, and that the v'y'ge is tried on her account—but the aunt, the cunning thing, knows all about it."

Mulford almost loathed the expression of his commander's countenance while Spike uttered the last words. At no time was that countenance very inviting, the features being

coarse and vulgar, while the colour of the entire face was of an ambiguous red, in which liquor and the seasons would seem to be blended in very equal quantities. Such a countenance, lighted up by a gleam of successful management, not to say with hopes and wishes that it will hardly do to dwell on, could not but be revolting to a youth of Harry Mulford's generous feelings, and most of all to one who entertained the sentiments which he was quite conscious of entertaining for Rose Budd. The young man made no reply, but turned his face toward the water, in order to conceal the expression of disgust that he was sensible must be strongly depicted on it.

The river, as the well-known arm of the sea in which the Swash was lying is erroneously termed, was just at that moment unusually clear of craft, and not a sail larger than that of a boat was to be seen between the end of Blackwell's Island and Corlaer's Hook, a distance of about a league. This stagnation in the movement of the port, at that particular point, was owing to the state of wind and tide. Of the first, there was little more than

a southerly air, while the last was about two-thirds ebb. Nearly everything that was expected on that tide, coastwise, and by the way of the Sound, had already arrived, and nothing could go eastward, with that light breeze and under canvas, until the flood made. Of course it was different with the steamers, which were paddling about like so many ducks, steering in all directions, though mostly crossing and recrossing at the ferries. Just as Mulford turned away from his commander, however, a large vessel of that class shoved her bows into the view, doubling the Hook, and going eastward. The first glance at this vessel sufficed to drive even Rose Budd momentarily out of the minds of both master and mate, and to give a new current to their thoughts. Spike had been on the point of walking up the wharf, but he now so far changed his purpose as actually to jump on board the brig and spring up alongside of his mate, on the taffrail, in order to get a better look at the steamer. Mulford, who loathed so much in his commander, was actually glad of this, Spike's rare merit as a seaman forming a sort

of attraction that held him, as it might be against his own will, bound to his service.

"What will they do next, Harry!" exclaimed the master, his manner and voice actually humanized, in air and sound at least, by this unexpected view of something new in his calling—"What *will* they do next?"

"I see no wheels, sir, nor any movement in the water astern, as if she were a propeller," returned the young man.

"She's an out-of-the-way sort of a hussey! She's a man-of-war too—one of Uncle Sam's new efforts."

"That can hardly be, sir. Uncle Sam has but three steamers, of any size or force, now the Missouri is burned, and yonder is one of them, lying at the Navy Yard, while another is, or was lately, laid up at Boston. The third is in the Gulf. This must be an entirely new vessel, if she belongs to Uncle Sam."

"New! she's as new as a Governor, and they tell me they've got so now that they choose five or six of *them*, up at Albany, every fall. That craft is sea-going, Mr. Mulford, as

any one can tell at a glance. She's none of your passenger-hoys."

"That's plain enough, sir—and she's armed. Perhaps she's English, and they've brought her here into this open spot to try some new machinery. Ay, ay! she's about to set her ensign to the navy-men at the yard, and we shall see to whom she belongs."

A long, low, expressive whistle from Spike succeeded this remark, the colours of the steamer going up to the end of a gaff on the sternmost of her schooner-rigged masts, just as Mulford ceased speaking. There was just air enough, aided by the steamer's motion, to open the bunting, and let the spectators see the design. There were the stars and stripes, as usual, but the last ran perpendicularly, instead of in a horizontal direction.

"Revenue, by George!" exclaimed the master, as soon as his breath was exhausted in the whistle. "Who would have believed they could have screwed themselves up to doing such a thing in that service?"

"I now remember to have heard that Uncle Sam was building some large steamers for the

revenue service, and, if I mistake not, with some new invention to get along with, that is neither wheel nor propeller. This must be one of these new craft, brought out here, into open water, just to try her, sir."

"You're right, sir, you're right. As to the natur' of the beast, you see her buntin', and no honest man can want more. If there's any thing I *do* hate, it is that flag, with its unnat'ral stripes, up and down, instead of running in the true old way. I *have* heard a lawyer say that the revenue flag of this country is unconstitutional, and that a vessel carrying it on the high seas might be sent in for piracy."

Although Harry Mulford was neither Puffendorf, nor Grotius, he had too much common sense, and too little prejudice in favour of even his own vocation, to swallow such a theory, had fifty Cherry-street lawyers sworn to its justice. A smile crossed his fine, firm-looking mouth, and something very like a reflection of that smile, if smiles *can* be reflected in one's own countenance, gleamed in his fine, large, dark eye.

"It would be somewhat singular, Captain Spike," he said, "if a vessel belonging to any nation should be seized as a pirate. The fact that she is national in character would clear her."

"Then let her carry a national flag, and be d——d to her," answered Spike fiercely. "I can show you law for what I say, Mr. Mulford. The American flag has its stripes fore and aft by law, and this chap carries his stripes perpendic'lar. If I commanded a cruizer, and fell in with one of these up and down gentry, hang me if I wouldn't just send him into port, and try the question in the old Almshouse."

Mulford probably did not think it worth while to argue the point any further, understanding the dogmatism and stolidity of his commander too well to deem it necessary. He preferred to turn to the consideration of the qualities of the steamer in sight, a subject on which, as seamen, they might better sympathize.

"That's a droll-looking revenue cutter, after all, Captain Spike," he said—"a craft better

fitted to go in a fleet, as a look-out vessel, than to chase a smuggler in-shore."

"And no goer in the bargain! I do not see how she gets along, for she keeps all snug under water; but unless she can travel faster than she does just now, the Molly Swash would soon lend her the Mother Carey's Chickens of her own wake to amuse her."

"She has the tide against her, just here, sir; no doubt she would do better in still water."

Spike muttered something between his teeth, and jumped down on deck, seemingly dismissing the subject of the revenue from his mind. His old, coarse, authoritative manner returned, and he again spoke to his mate about Rose Budd, her aunt, the "ladies' cabin," the "the young flood," and "casting off," as soon as the last made. Mulford listened respectfully, though with a manifest distaste for the instructions he was receiving. He knew his man, and a feeling of dark distrust came over him, as he listened to his orders concerning the famous accommodations he intended to give to Rose Budd and that "capital old lady, her aunt;" his opinions of "the immense deal

of good sea-air and a v'y'ge would do Rose," and how "comfortable they both would be on board the Molly Swash."

"I honour and respect Mrs. Budd, as my captain's lady, you see, Mr. Mulford, and intend to treat her accordin'ly. She knows it—and Rose knows it—and they both declare they'd rather sail with *me*, since sail they must, than with any other ship-master out of America."

"You sailed once with Captain Budd yourself, I think I have heard you say, sir?"

"The old fellow brought me up. I was with him from my tenth to my twentieth year, and then broke adrift to see fashions. We all do that, you know, Mr. Mulford, when we are young and ambitious, and my turn came as well as another's."

"Captain Budd must have been a good deal older than his wife, sir, if *you* sailed with him when a boy," Mulford observed a little drily.

"Yes; I own to forty-eight, though no one would think me more than five or six-and-thirty, to look at me. There was a great difference between old Dick Budd and his wife,

as you say, he being about fifty when he married, and she less than twenty. Fifty is a good age for matrimony, in a man, Mulford; as is twenty in a young woman."

"Rose Budd is not yet nineteen, I have heard her say," returned the mate, with emphasis.

"Youngish, I will own, but that's a fault a liberal-minded man can overlook. Every day, too, will lessen it. Well, look to the cabins, and see all clear for a start. Josh will be down presently with a cartload of stores, and you'll take 'em aboard without delay."

As Spike uttered this order, his foot was on the plank-sheer of the bulwarks, in the act of passing to the wharf again. On reaching the shore, he turned and looked intently at the revenue steamer, and his lips moved, as if he were secretly uttering maledictions on her. We say maledictions, as the expression of his fierce ill-favoured countenance too plainly showed that they could not be blessings. As for Mulford, there was still something on his mind, and he followed to the gangway ladder and ascended it, waiting for a moment when

the mind of his commander might be less occupied to speak. The opportunity soon occurred, Spike having satisfied himself with the second look at the steamer.

"I hope you don't mean to sail again without a second mate, Captain Spike?" he said.

"I do though, I can tell you. I hate Dickies—they are always in the way, and the captain has to keep just as much of a watch with one as without one."

"That will depend on his quality. You and I have both been Dickies in our time, sir; and my time was not long ago."

"Ay—ay—I know all about it—but you did'nt stick to it long enough to get spoiled. I would have no man aboard the Swash who made more than two v'y'ges as second officer. As I want no spies aboard my craft, I'll try it once more without a Dicky."

Saying this in a sufficiently positive manner, Captain Stephen Spike rolled up the wharf, much as a ship goes off before the wind, now inclining to the right, and then again to the left. The gait of the man would have proclaimed him a sea-dog, to any one acquainted

with that animal, as far as he could be seen. The short squab figure, the arms bent nearly at right angles at the elbow, and working like two fins with each roll of the body, the stumpy, solid legs, with the feet looking in the line of his course and kept wide apart, would all have contributed to the making up of such an opinion. Accustomed as he was to this beautiful sight, Harry Mulford kept his eyes riveted on the retiring person of his commander, until it disappeared behind a pile of lumber, waddling always in the direction of the more thickly peopled parts of the town. Then he turned and gazed at the steamer, which by this time had fairly passed the brig, and seemed to be actually bound through the Gate. That steamer was certainly a noble-looking craft, but our young man fancied she struggled along through the water heavily. She might be quick at need, but she did not promise as much by her present rate of moving. Still, she was a noble-looking craft, and as Mulford descended to the deck again, he almost regretted he did not belong to her; or, at least, to anything but the Molly Swash.

Two hours produced a sensible change in and around that brigantine. Her people had all come back to duty, and what was very remarkable among seafaring folk, sober to a man. But, as has been said, Spike was a temperance man, as respects all under his orders at least, if not strictly so in practice himself. The crew of the Swash was large for a half-rigged brig of only two hundred tons, but, as her spars were very square, and all her gear as well as her mould seemed constructed for speed, it was probable more hands than common were necessary to work her with facility and expedition. After all, there were not many persons to be enumerated among the "people of the Molly Swash," as they called themselves; not more than a dozen, including those aft, as well as those forward. A peculiar feature of this crew, however, was the circumstance that they were all middle-aged men, with the exception of the mate, and all thorough-bred sea-dogs. Even Josh, the cabin-boy as he was called, was an old, wrinkled, gray-headed negro, of near sixty. If the crew wanted a little in the elasticity of youth, it possessed the steadiness and

experience of their time of life, every man appearing to know exactly what to do, and when to do it. This, indeed, composed their great merit; an advantage that Spike well knew how to appreciate.

The stores had been brought alongside of the brig in a cart, and were already stowed in their places. Josh had brushed and swept, until the ladies' cabin could be no neater. This ladies' cabin was a small apartment beneath a trunk, which was, ingeniously enough, separated from the main cabin by pantries and double doors. The arrangement was unusual, and Spike had several times hinted that there was a history connected with that cabin; though what the history was Mulford could never induce him to relate. The latter knew that the brig had been used for a forced trade on the Spanish Main, and had heard something of her deeds in bringing off specie, and proscribed persons, at different epochs in the revolutions of that part of the world, and he had always understood that her present commander and owner had sailed in her as mate, for many years before he had risen to

his present station. Now, all was regular in the way of records, bills of sale, and other documents; Stephen Spike appearing in both the capacities just named. The register proved that the brig had been built as far back as the last English war, as a private cruiser, but recent and expensive repairs had made her "better than new," as her owner insisted, and there was no question as to her sea-worthiness. It is true that the insurance offices blew upon her, and would have nothing to do with a craft that had seen two score years and ten; but this gave none who belonged to her any concern, inasmuch as they could scarcely have been underwritten in their trade, let the age of the vessel be what it might. It was enough for them that the brig was safe and exceedingly fast, insurances never saving the lives of the people, whatever else might be their advantages. With Mulford it was an additional recommendation, that the Swash was usually thought to be of uncommonly just proportions.

By half-past two P.M., everything was ready for getting the brigantine under way. Her

foretopsail—or fore*taw*sail, as Spike called it —was loose, the fasts were singled, and a spring had been carried to a post in the wharf, that was well forward of the starboard bow, and the brig's head turned to the south-west, or down stream, and consequently facing the young flood. Nothing seemed to connect the vessel with the land but a broad gangway plank, to which Mulford had attached life-lines, with more care than it is usual to meet with on board of vessels employed in short voyages. The men stood about the decks with their arms thrust into the bosoms of their shirts, and the whole picture was one of silent, and possibly of somewhat uneasy expectation. Nothing was said, however; Mulford walking the quarter-deck alone, occasionally looking up the still little-tenanted streets of that quarter of the suburbs, as if to search for a carriage. As for the revenue-steamer, she had long before gone through the southern passage of Blackwell's, steering for the Gate.

"Dat's dem, Mr. Mulford," Josh at length cried, from the look-out he had taken in a stern-port, where he could see over the low

bulwarks of the vessel. "Yes, dat's dem, sir. I know dat old gray horse dat carries his head so low and sorrowful-like, as a horse has a right to do dat has to drag a cab about this big town. My eye! what a horse it is, sir!'

Josh was right, not only as to the gray horse that carried his head "sorrowful like," but as to the cab and its contents. The vehicle was soon on the wharf, and in its door soon appeared the short, sturdy figure of Captain Spike, backing out, much as a bear descends a tree. On top of the vehicle were several light articles of female appliances, in the shape of band boxes, bags, &c., the trunks having previously arrived in a cart. Well might that over-driven gray horse appear sorfowful, and travel with a lowered head. The cab, when it gave up its contents, discovered a load of no less than four persons besides the driver, all of weight and of dimensions in proportion, with the exception of the pretty and youthful Rose Budd. Even she was plump, and of a well-rounded person; though still light and slender. But her aunt was a fair picture of a ship-master's widow; solid, comfortable, and

buxom. Neither was she old nor ugly. On the contrary, her years did not exceed forty, and being well preserved, in consequence of never having been a mother, she might even have passed for thirty-five. The great objection to her appearance was the somewhat indefinite character of her shape, which seemed to blend too many of its charms into one. The fourth person, in the fore, was Biddy Noon, the Irish servant, and *factotum* of Mrs. Budd, who was a pock-marked, red-faced, and red-armed single woman, about her mistress's own age and weight, though less stout to the eye.

Of Rose we shall not stop to say much here. Her deep-blue eye, which was equally spirited and gentle, if one can use such contradictory terms, seemed alive with interest and curiosity, running over the brig, the wharf, the arm of the sea, the two islands, and all near her, including the Alms-House, with such devouring rapidity as might be expected in a town-bred girl who was setting out on her travels for the first time. Let us be understood; we say town-bred, because such was the fact; for

Rose Budd had been both born and educated in Manhattan, though we are far from wishing to be understood that she was either very well-born or highly educated. Her station in life may be inferred from that of her aunt, and he education from her station. Of the two, the last was, perhaps, a trifle the highest.

We have said that the fine blue eye of Rose passed swiftly over the various objects near her, as she alighted from the cab, and it naturally took in the form of Harry Mulford, as he stood in the gangway, offering his arm to aid her aunt and herself in passing the brig's side. A smile of recognition was exchanged between the young people, as their eyes met, and the colour, which formed so bright a charm in Rose's sweet face, deepened, in a way to prove that that colour spoke with a tongue and eloquence of its own. Nor was Mulford's cheek mute on the occasion, though he helped the hesitating, half-doubting, half-bold girl along the plank with a steady hand and rigid muscles. As for the aunt, as a captain's widow, she had not felt it necessary to betray any extraordinary emotions in ascending the plank, unless,

indeed, it might be those of delight on finding ner foot once more on the deck of a vessel!

Something of the same feeling governed Biddy, too, for, as Mulford civilly extended his hand to her also, she exclaimed—

"No fear of me, Mr. Mate—I came from Ireland by wather, and knows all about ships and brigs, I do. If you could have seen the times we had, and the saas we crossed, you'd not think it nadeful to say much to the likes iv me."

Spike had tact enough to understand he would be out of his element in assisting females along that plank, and he was busy in sending what he called "the old lady's dunnage" on board, and in discharging the cabman. As soon as this was done, he sprang into the main-channels, and thence, *viâ* the bulwarks, on deck, ordering the plank to be hauled aboard. A solitary labourer was paid a quarter to throw off the fasts from the ring-bolts and posts, and everything was instantly in motion to cast the brig loose. Work went on as if the vessel were in haste, and consequently with

great activity. Spike bestirred himself, giving his orders in a way to denote he had been long accustomed to exercise authority on the deck of a vessel, and knew his calling to its minutiæ. The only ostensible difference between his deportment to-day and on any ordinary occasion, perhaps, was the circumstance that he now seemed anxious to get clear of the wharf, and that in a way which might have attracted notice in any suspicious and attentive observer. It is possible that such a one was not very distant, and that Spike was aware of his presence, for a respectable-looking, well-dressed, middle-aged man *had* come down one of the adjacent streets, to a spot within a hundred yards of the wharf, and stood silently watching the movements of the brig, as he leaned against a fence. The want of houses in that quarter enabled any person to see this stranger from the deck of the Swash, but no one on board her seemed to regard him at all, unless it might be the master.

"Come, bear a hand, my hearty, and toss that bow-fast clear," cried the captain, whose impatience to be off seemed to increase as the

time to do so approached nearer and nearer. "Off with it, at once, and let her go."

The man on the wharf threw the turns of the hawser clear of the post, and the Swash was released forward. A smaller line, for a spring, had been run some distance along the wharves, ahead of the vessel, and brought in aft. Her people clapped on this, and gave way to their craft, which, being comparatively light, was easily moved, and was very manageable. As this was done, the distant spectator who had been leaning on the fence moved towards the wharf with a step a little quicker than common. Almost at the same instant, a short, stout, sailor-like looking little person, waddled down the nearest street, seeming to be in somewhat of a hurry, and presently he joined the other stranger, and appeared to enter into conversation with him; pointing towards the Swash as he did so. All this time, both continued to advance toward the wharf.

In the meanwhile, Spike and his people were not idle. The tide did not run very strong near the wharves, and in the sort of a bight in which the vessel had lain, but, such as it was,

it soon took the brig on her inner bow, and began to cast her head off shore. The people at the spring pulled away with all their force, and got sufficient motion on their vessel to overcome the tide, and to give the rudder an influence. The latter was put hard a-starboard, and helped to cast the brig's head to the southward.

Down to this moment, the only sail that was loose on board the Swash was the fore-topsail, as mentioned. This still hung in the gear, but a hand had been sent aloft to overhaul the buntlines and clewlines, and men were also at the sheets. In a minute the sail was ready for hoisting. The Swash carried a wapper of a fore-and-aft mainsail, and, what is more, it was fitted with a standing gaff, for appearance in port. At sea, Spike knew better than to trust to this arrangement, but in fine weather, and close in with the land, he found it convenient to have the sail haul out and brail like a ship's spanker. As the gaff was now aloft, it was only necessary to let go the brails to loosen this broad sheet of canvas, and to clap on the out-hauler, to set it. This was probably the

reason why the brig was so unceremoniously cast into the stream, without showing more of her cloth. The jib and flying-jibs, however, did at that moment drop beneath their booms, ready for hoisting.

Such was the state of things as the two strangers came first upon the wharf. Spike was on the taffrail, overhauling the main sheet, and Mulford was near him, casting the fore-topsail braces from the pins, preparatory to clapping on the halyards.

"I say, Mr. Mulford," asked the captain, "did you ever see either of them chaps afore? These jokers on the wharf, I mean."

"Not to my recollection, sir," answered the mate, looking over the taffrail to examine the parties. "The little one is a burster! The funniest looking little fat old fellow I've seen in many a day."

"Ay, ay, them fat little bursters, as you call 'em, are sometimes full of the devil. I don't like either of the chaps, and am right glad we are all well cast, before they got here."

"I do not think either would be likely to do us much harm, Captain Spike."

"There's no knowing, sir. The biggest fellow looks as if he might lug out a silver oar at any moment."

"I believe the single oar is no longer used, in this country at least," answered Mulford, smiling. "And if it were, what have we to fear from it? I fancy the brig has paid her reckoning."

"She don't owe a cent, nor ever shall for twenty-four hours after the bill is made out, while I own *her*. They call me Ready-money Stephen, round among the ship-chandlers and caulkers. But I don't like them chaps, and what I don't relish I never swallow, you know."

"They'll hardly try to get aboard us, sir; you see we are quite clear of the wharf, and the mainsail will take now, if we set it."

Spike ordered the mate to clap on the out-hauler, and spread that broad sheet of canvas at once to the little breeze there was. This was almost immediately done, when the sail filled, and began to be felt on the movement of the vessel. Still, that movement was very slow, the wind being so light, and the *vis*

inertiæ of so large a body remaining to be overcome. The brig receded from the wharf, almost in a line at right angles to its face, inch by inch, as it might be, dropping slowly up with the tide at the same time. Mulford now passed forward to set the jibs, and to get the topsail on the craft, leaving Spike on the taffrail, keenly eying the strangers, who, by this time, had got down nearly to the end of the wharf, at the berth so lately occupied by the Swash. That the captain was uneasy was evident enough, that feeling being exhibited in his countenance, blended with a malignant ferocity.

"Has that brig any pilot?" asked the larger and better-looking of the two strangers.

"What's that to you, friend?" demanded Spike, in return. "Have you a Hell-Gate Branch?"

"I may have one, or I may not. It is not usual for so large a craft to run the Gate without a pilot."

"Oh! my gentleman's below, brushing up his logarithms. We shall have him on deck to take his departure before long, when I'll let

him know your kind inquiries after his health."

The man on the wharf seemed to be familiar with this sort of sea-wit, and he made no answer, but continued that close scrutiny of the brig, by turning his eyes in all directions, now looking below, and now aloft, which had in truth occasioned Spike's principal cause for uneasiness.

"Is not that Captain Stephen Spike, of the brigantine Molly Swash?" called out the little dumpling-looking person, in a cracked, dwarfish sort of a voice, that was admirably adapted to his appearance. Our captain fairly started; turned full toward the speaker; regarded him intently for a moment, and gulped the words he was about to utter, like one confounded. As he gezed, however, at little dumpy, examining his bow-legs, red broad cheeks, and coarse snub nose, he seemed to regain his self-command, as if satisfied the dead had not really returned to life.

"Are you acquainted with the gentleman you have named?" he asked by way of answer. "You speak of him as one who ought to know him."

"A body is apt to know a shipmate. Stephen Spike and I sailed together twenty years since, and I hope to live to sail with him again."

"*You* sail with Stephen Spike? when and where, may I ask, and in what v'y'ge, pray?"

"The last time was twenty years since. Have you forgotten little Jack Tier, Captain Spike?"

Spike looked astonished, and well he might, for he had supposed Jack to be dead fully fifteen years. Time and hard service had greatly altered him, but the general resemblance in figure, stature, and waddle, certainly remained. Notwithstanding the Jack Tier Spike remembered was quite a different person from this Jack Tier. That Jack had worn his intensely black hair clubbed and curled, whereas this Jack had cut his locks into short bristles, which time had turned into an intense gray. That Jack was short and thick, but he was flat and square; whereas this Jack was just as short, a good deal thicker, and as round as a dumpling. In one thing, however, the likeness still remained perfect. Both Jacks chewed to-

bacco to a degree that became a distinct feature in their appearance.

Spike had many reasons for wishing Jack Tier were not resuscitated in this extraordinary manner, and some for being glad to see him. The fellow had once been largely in his confidence, and knew more than was quite safe for any one to remember but himself, while he might be of great use to him in his future operations. It is always convenient to have one at your elbow who thoroughly understands you, and Spike would have lowered a boat and sent it to the wharf to bring Jack off, were it not for the gentleman who was so inquisitive about pilots. Under the circumstances he determined to forego the advantages of Jack's presence, reserving the right to hunt him up on his return.

The reader will readily enough comprehend that the Molly Swash was not absolutely standing still while the dialogue related was going on, and the thoughts we have recorded were passing through her master's mind. On the contrary, she was not only in motion, but that motion was gradually increasing, and by the time all was said that has been related, it had

become necessary for those who spoke to raise their voices to an inconvenient pitch in order to be heard. This circumstance alone would soon have put an end to the conversation, had not Spike's pausing to reflect brought about the same result as mentioned.

In the meantime Mulford had got the canvas spread. Forward, the Swash showed all the cloth of a full-rigged brig, even to royals and flying jib; while aft, her mast was the raking, tall, naked pole of an American schooner. There was a taunt top-mast too, to which a gaff-topsail was set, and the gear proved that she could also show, at need, a staysail in this part of her, if necessary. As the Gate was before them, however, the people had set none but plain manageable canvas.

The Molly Swash kept close on a wind, luffing athwart the broad reach she was in, until far enough to weather Blackwell's, when she edged off to her course, and went through the southern passage. Although the wind remained light and a little baffling, the brig was so easily impelled, and was so very handy, that there was no difficulty in keeping her perfectly in com-

mand. The tide, too, was fast increasing in strength and velocity, and the movement from this cause alone was getting to be sufficiently rapid.

As for the passengers, of whom we have lost sight in order to get the brig under weigh, they were now on deck again. At first, they had all gone below, under the care of Josh, a somewhat rough groom of the chambers, to take possession of their apartment, a sufficiently neat and exceedingly comfortable cabin, supplied with everything that could be wanted at sea, and, what was more, lined on two of its sides with state-rooms. It is true, all these apartments were small, and the state-rooms were very low, but no fault could be found with their neatness and general arrangements, when it was recollected that one was on board a vessel.

"Here ebbery t'ing heart can wish," said Josh, exultingly, who being an old-school black, did not disdain to use some of the old-school dialect of his caste. "Yes, ladies, ebbery t'ing. Let Captain Spike alone for dat! He won'erful at accommodation! Not a bed-bug aft—know better dan come here: jest like de people,

in dat respects, and keep deir place forrard. You nebber see a pig come on de quarter-deck, nudder."

"You must maintain excellent discipline, Josh," cried Rose, in one of the sweetest voices in the world, which was easily attuned to merriment—"and we are delighted to learn what you tell us. How do you manage to keep up these distinctions, and make such creatures know their places so well?"

"Nuttin easier, if you begins right, miss. As for de pig, I teach dem wid scaldin' water. Whenever I sees a pig come aft, I gets a little water from de copper, and just scald him wid it. You can't t'ink, miss, how dat mend his manners, and make squeel fuss, and t'ink arter. In dat fashion I soon gets de ole ones in good trainin', and den I has no more trouble with dem as comes fresh aboard; for de ole hog tell de young one, and 'em won'erful cunnin', and know how to take care of 'emsel."

Rose Budd's sweet eyes were full of fun and expectation, and she could no more repress her laugh than youth and spirits can always be discreet.

"Yes, with the pigs," she cried, "that might do very well; but how is it with those—other creatures?"

"Rosy, dear," interrupted the aunt, "I wish you would say no more about such shocking things. It's enough for us that Captain Spike has ordered them all to stay forward among the men, which is always done on board well disciplined vessels. I've heard your uncle say, a hundred times, that the quarter-deck was sacred, and that might be enough to keep such animals off."

It was barely necessary to look at Mrs. Budd in the face to get a very accurate general notion of her character. She was one of those inane uncultivated beings, who seem to be protected by a benevolent Providence in their pilgrimage on earth, for they do not seem to possess the power to protect themselves. Her very countenance expressed imbecility and mental dependence, credulity, and a love of gossip. Notwithstanding these radical weaknesses, the good woman had some of the better instincts of her sex, and was never guilty of anything that could properly convey reproach. She was no

monitress for Rose, however, the niece much oftener influencing the aunt than the aunt influencing the niece. The latter had been fortunate enough in having had an excellent instructress, who, though incapable of teaching her much in the way of accomplishments, had imparted a great deal that was respectable and useful. Rose had character, and strong character too, as the course of our narrative will show; but her worthy aunt was a pure picture of as much mental imbecility as at all comported with the privileges of self-government.

The conversation about "those other creatures" was effectually checked by Mrs. Budd's horror of the "animals," and Josh was called on deck so shortly after, as to prevent its being renewed. The females staid below a few minutes, to take possession, and then they reappeared on deck, to gaze at the horrors of the Hell Gate passage. Rose was all eyes, wonder, and admiration at everything she saw. This was actually the first time she had ever been on the water, in any sort of craft, though born and brought up in one of the most thronged havens in the world. But there must be a beginning

to everything, and this was Rose Budd's beginning on the water. It is true the brigantine was a very beautiful, as well as an exceedingly swift vessel, but all this was lost on Rose, who would have admired a horse-jockey bound to the West Indies, in this the incipient state of her nautical knowledge. Perhaps the exquisite neatness that Mulford maintained about every thing that came under his care, and that included everything on deck, or above board, and about which neatness Spike occasionally muttered an oath, as so much senseless trouble, contributed somewhat to Rose's pleasure: but her admiration would scarcely have been less at any thing that had sails, and seemed to move through the water with a power approaching that of volition.

It was very different with Mrs. Budd. She, good woman, had actually made one voyage with her late husband, and she fancied that she knew all about a vessel. It was her delight to talk on nautical subjects, and never did she really feel her great superiority over her niece so very unequivocally as when the subject of the ocean was introduced, about which she

did know something, and touching which Rose was profoundly ignorant, or as ignorant as a girl of lively imagination could remain with the information gleaned from others.

"I am not surprised you are astonished at the sight of the vessel, Rosy," observed the self-complacent aunt at one of her niece's exclamations of admiration. "A vessel is a very wonderful thing, and we are told what extr'orny beings they are that 'go down to the sea in ships.' But you are to know that this is not a ship at all, but only a half-jigger rigged, which is altogether a different thing."

"Was my uncle's vessel, The Rose in Bloom, then, very different from the Swash?"

"Very different, indeed, child! Why, The Rose in Bloom was a full-jiggered ship, and had twelve masts—and this is only a half-jiggered brig, and has but two masts. See, you may count them—one—two!"

Harry Mulford was coiling away a top-gallant-brace, directly in front of Mrs. Budd and Rose, and, at hearing this account of the wonderful equipment of The Rose in Bloom, he suddenly looked up, with a lurking expression about his

eye that the niece very well comprehended, while he exclaimed, without much reflection, under the impulse of surprise—

"Twelve masts! Did I understand you to say, ma'am, that Captain Budd's ship had twelve masts?"

"Yes, sir, *twelve!* and I can tell you all their names, for I learnt them by heart—it appearing to me proper that a ship-master's wife should know the names of all the masts in her husband's vessel. Do you wish to hear their names, Mr. Mulford?"

Harry Mulford would have enjoyed this conversation to the top of his bent, had it not been for Rose. She well knew her aunt's general weakness of intellect, and especially its weakness on this particular subject, but she would suffer no one to manifest contempt for either, if in her power to prevent it. It is seldom one so young, so mirthful, so ingenuous and innocent in the expression of her countenance, assumed so significant and rebuking a frown as did pretty Rose Budd when she heard the mate's involuntary exclamation about the "twelve masts." Harry, who was not easily

checked by his equals, or any of his own sex, submitted to that rebuking frown with the meekness of a child, and stammered out, in answer to the well-meaning, but weak-minded widow's question—

"If you please, Mrs. Budd—just as you please, ma'am—only twelve is a good many masts—" Rose frowned again—"that is more than I'm used to seeing—that's all."

"I dare say, Mr. Mulford—for you sail in only a half-jigger; but Captain Budd always sailed in a full jigger—and *his* full-jiggered ship had just twelve masts, and, to prove it to you, I'll give you the names—first, then, there were the fore, main, and mizen masts—"

"Yes—yes—ma'am," stammered Harry, who wished the twelve masts and The Rose in Bloom at the bottom of the ocean, since her owner's niece still continued to look coldly displeased—"that's right I can swear!"

"Very true, sir, and you'll find I am right as to all the rest. Then there were the fore, main, and mizen top-masts, they made six, if I can count, Mr. Mulford."

"Ah!" exclaimed the mate, laughing, in

spite of Rose's frowns, as the manner in which the old sea-dog had quizzed his wife became apparent to him. "I see how it is—you are quite right, ma'am—I dare say The Rose in Bloom had all these masts, and some to spare."

"Yes, sir, I knew you would be satisfied. The fore, main, and mizen top-gallant masts make nine—and the fore, main, and mizen royals make just twelve. Oh, I'm never wrong in anything about a vessel, especially if she is a full-jiggered ship."

Mulford had some difficulty in restraining his smiles each time the full-jigger was mentioned, but Rose's expression of countenance kept him in excellent order—and she, innocent creature, saw nothing ridiculous in the term, though the twelve masts had given her a little alarm. Delighted that the old lady had got through her enumeration of the spars with so much success, Rose cried, in the exuberance of her spirits—

"Well, aunty, for my part, I find a half-jigger vessel so very, very beautiful, that I do not know how I should behave were I to go on board a *full*-jigger."

Mulford turned abruptly away, the circumstance of Rose's making herself ridiculous giving him sudden pain, though he could have laughed at her aunt by the hour.

"Ah, my dear, that is on account of your youth and inexperience—but you will learn better in time. I was just so, myself, when I was of your age, and thought the fore-rafters were as handsome as the squared jiggers, but soon after I married Captain Budd I felt the necessity of knowing more than I did about ships, and I got him to teach me. He didn't like the business, at first, and pretended I would never learn; but, at last, it came all at once like, and then he used to be delighted to hear me 'talk ship,' as he called it. I've known him laugh, with his cronies, as if ready to die, at my expertness in sea-terms, for half an hour together—and then he would swear—that was the worst fault your uncle had, Rosy—he *would* swear, sometimes, in a way that frightened me, I do declare!"

"But he never swore at you, aunty?"

"I can't say that he did exactly do that, but he would swear all round me, even if he

didn't actually touch me, when things went wrong—but it would have done your heart good to hear him laugh! He had a most excellent heart, just like your own, Rosy dear; but, for that matter, all the Budds have excellent hearts, and one of the commonest ways your uncle had of showing it was to laugh, particularly when we were together and talking. Oh, he used to delight in hearing me converse, especially about vessels, and never failed to get me at it when he had company. I see his good-natured, excellent-hearted countenance at this moment, with the tears running down his fat, manly cheeks, as he shook his very sides with laughter. I may live a hundred years, Rosy, before I meet again with your uncle's equal."

This was a subject that invariably silenced Rose. She remembered her uncle herself, and remembered his affectionate manner of laughing at her aunt, and she always wished the latter to get through her eulogiums on her married happiness, as soon as possible, whenever the subject was introduced.

All this time the Molly Swash kept in

motion. Spike never took a pilot when he could avoid it, and his mind was too much occupied with his duty, in that critical navigation, to share at all in the conversation of his passengers, though he did endeavour to make himself agreeable to Rose, by an occasional remark, when a favourable opportunity offered. As soon as he had worked his brig over into the south or weather passage of Blackwell's, however, there remained little for him to do, until she had drifted through it, a distance of a mile or more, and this gave him leisure to do the honours. He pointed out the castellated edifice of Blackwell's as the new penitentiary, and the hamlet of villas, on the other shore, as Ravenswood, though there is neither wood nor ravens to authorize the name. But the "Sunswick," which satisfied the Delafield and Gibbses of the olden time, and which distinguished their lofty halls and broad lawns, was not elegant enough for the cockney tastes of these latter days, so "wood" must be made to usurp the place of cherries and apples, and "ravens" that of gulls, in order to satisfy its cravings. But all

this was lost on Spike. He remembered the shore as it had been twenty years before, and he saw what it was now, but little did he care for the change. On the whole, he rather preferred the Grecian temples, over which the ravens would have been compelled to fly, had there been any ravens in that neighbourhood, to the old fashioned and highly respectable residence that once alone occupied the spot. The point he did understand, however, and on the merits of which he had something to say, was a little further ahead. That, too, had been re-christened—the Hallet's Cove of the mariner being converted into Astoria—not that place at the mouth of Oregon, which came so near bringing us to blows with our "ancestors in England," as the worthy denizens of that quarter choose to consider themselves still, if one can judge by their language. This Astoria was a very different place, and is one of the many suburban villages that are shooting up, like mushrooms, in a night, around the great *Commercial* Emporium. This spot Spike understood perfectly, and it was not likely that he would pass it with-

out communicating a portion of his knowledge to Rose.

"There, Miss Rose," he said, with a didactic sort of air, pointing with his short, thick finger at the little bay which was just opening to their view; "there's as neat a cove as a craft need bring up in. That *used to be* a capital place to lie in, to wait for a wind to pass the Gate; but it has got to be most too public for my taste. I'm rural, I tell Mulford, and love to get in out-of-the-way berths with my brig, where she can see salt-meadows, and smell the clover. You never catch me down in any of the crowded slips around the markets, or anywhere in that part of the town, for I *do* love country air. That's Hallet's Cove, Miss Rose, and a pretty anchorage it would be for us, if the wind and tide didn't sarve to take us through the Gate."

"Are we near the Gate, Captain Spike?" asked Rose, the fine bloom on her cheek lessening a little, under the apprehension that formidable name is apt to awaken in the breasts of the inexperienced.

"Half a mile or so. It begins just at the

other end of this island on our larboard hand, and will be all over in about another half mile, or so. It's no such bad place, a'ter all, is Hell Gate, to them that's used to it. I call myself a pilot in Hell-Gate, though I *have* no branch."

"I wish, Captain Spike, I could teach you to give that place its proper and polite name. We call it Whirl-Gate altogether now," said the relict.

"Well, that's new to me," cried Spike. "I *have* heard some chicken-mouthed folk say *Hurl*-Gate, but this is the first time I ever heard it called Whirl-Gate—they'll get it to Whirlagig-Gate next. I don't think that my old commander, Captain Budd, called the passage anything but honest up and down Hell-Gate."

"That he did—that he did—and all my arguments and reading could not teach him any better. I proved to him that it was Whirl-Gate, as any one can see that it ought to be. It is full of whirlpools, they say, and that shows what nature meant the name to be."

"But, aunty," put in Rose, half reluctantly,

half anxious to speak, "what has *gate* to do with whirlpools? You will remember it is called a gate—the gate to the wicked place, I suppose is meant."

"Rose, you amaze me! How can *you*, a young woman of only nineteen, stand up for so vulgar a name as Hell-Gate?"

"Do you think it as vulgar as Hurl-Gate, aunty? To me it always seems the most vulgar to be straining at gnats."

"Yes," said Spike, sentimentally, "I'm quite of Miss Rose's way of thinking—straining at gnats is very ill manners, especially at table. I once knew a man who strained in this way, until I thought he would have choked, though it was but a fly to be sure; but gnats are nothing but small flies, you know, Miss Rose. Yes, I'm quite of your way of thinking, Miss Rose; it *is* very vulgar to be straining at gnats and flies, more particularly at table. But you'll find no flies or gnats aboard here, to be straining at, or brushing away, or to annoy you. Stand by there, my hearties, and see all clear to run through Hell-Gate.

Don't let me catch you straining at anything, though it should be the fin of a whale!"

The people forward looked at each other, as they listened to this novel admonition, though they called out the customary "Ay, ay, sir," as they went the sheets, braces, and bowlines. To them the passage of no Hell-Gate conveyed the idea of any particular terror, and with the one they were about to enter they were much too familiar to care anything about it.

The brig was now floating fast, with the tide, up abreast of the east end of Blackwell's, and in two or three more minutes she would be fairly in the Gate. Spike was aft, where he could command a view of every thing forward, and Mulford stood on the quarter-deck, to look after the head-braces. An old and trustworthy seaman, who acted as a sort of boatswain, had the charge on the forecastle, and was to tend the sheets and tack. His name was Rove.

"See all clear," called out Spike. "D'ye hear there, for'ard! I shall make a half-broad in the Gate, if the wind favour us, and the tide prove strong enough to hawse us to windward sufficiently to clear the pot—so mind your—"

The captain breaking off in the middle of this harangue, Mulford turned his head, in order to see what might be the matter. There was Spike, levelling a spy-glass at a boat that was pulling swiftly out of the north channel, and shooting like an arrow directly athwart the brig's bows into the main passage of the Gate. He stepped to the captain's elbow.

"Just take a look at them chaps, Mr. Mulford," said Spike, handing his mate the glass.

"They seem in a hurry," answered Harry as he adjusted the glass to his eye, "and will go through the Gate in less time than it will take to mention the circumstance."

"What do you make of them, sir?"

"The little man who called himself Jack Tier is in the stern-sheets of the boat, for one," answered Mulford.

"And the other, Harry—what do you make of the other?"

"It seems to be the chap who hailed us to know if we had a pilot. He means to board us at Riker's Island, and make us pay pilotage, whether we want his services or not."

"Blast him and his pilotage too! Give me

the glass,"—taking another long look at the boat, which by this time was glancing, rather than pulling, nearly at right angles across his bows. "I want no such pilot aboard here, Mr. Mulford. Take another look at him—here, you can see him, away on our weather bow, already."

Mulford did take another look at him, and this time his examination was longer and more scrutinizing than before.

"It is not easy to cover him with the glass," observed the young man—"the boat seems fairly to fly."

"We're fore-reaching too near the Hog's Back, Captain Spike," roared the boatswain, from forward.

"Ready about—hard a lee!" shouted Spike. "Let all fly, for'ard—help her round, boys, all you can, and wait for no orders! Bestir yourselves—bestir yourselves."

It was time the crew should be in earnest. While Spike's attention had been thus diverted by the boat, the brig had got into the strongest of the current, which, by setting her fast to windward, had trebled the power of the air,

and this was shooting her over toward one of the greatest dangers of the passage on a flood tide. As everybody bestired themselves, however, she was got round and filled on the opposite tack, just in time to clear the rocks. Spike breathed again, but his head was still full of the boat. The danger he had just escaped as Scylla met him as Charybdis. The boatswain again roared to go about. The order was given as the vessel began to pitch in a heavy swell. At the next instant she rolled until the water came on deck, whirled with her stern down the tide, and her bows rose as if she were about to leap out of the water. The Swash had hit the Pot Rock!

CHAPTER II.

"*Watch.* If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?

"*Dogb.* Truly, by your office you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled; the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is, to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company."

Much Ado About Nothing.

We left the brigantine of Captain Spike in a very critical situation, and the master himself in great confusion of mind. A thorough seaman, this accident would never have happened to him, but for the sudden appearance of the boat and its passengers, one of whom appeared to be a source of great uneasiness to him. As might be expected, the circumstance of striking a place as dangerous as the Pot Rock in Hell-Gate produced a great sensation on board the vessel. This sensation betrayed itself in various ways, and according to the characters, habits, and native firmness of the parties. As for the ship-master's relict, she seized hold of

the main-mast, and screamed so loud and perseveringly, as to cause the sensation to extend itself into the adjacent and thriving village of Astoria, where it was distinctly heard by divers of those who dwelt near the water. Biddy Noon had her share in this clamour, lying down on the deck in order to prevent rolling over, and possibly to scream more at her leisure; while Rose had sufficient self-command to be silent, though her cheeks lost their colour.

Nor was there anything extraordinary in females betraying this alarm, when one remembers the somewhat astounding signs of danger by which these persons were surrounded. There is always something imposing in the swift movement of a considerable body of water. When this movement is aided by whirlpools, and the other similar accessories of an interrupted current, it frequently becomes startling, more especially to those who happen to be on the element itself. This is peculiarly the case with the Pot Rock, where not only does the water roll and roar as if agitated by a mighty wind, but where it even breaks, the

foam seeming to glance up stream in the rapid succession of wave to wave. Had the Swash remained in her terrific berth more than a second or two, she would have proved what is termed a "total loss;" but she did not. Happily the Pot Rock lies so low, that it is not apt to fetch up anything of a light draught of water; and the brigantine's fore-foot had just settled on its summit long enough to cause the vessel to whirl round and make her obeisance to the place, when a succeeding swell lifted her clear, and away she went down stream, rolling as if scudding in a gale, and for a moment under no command whatever. There lay another danger a-head,—or it would be better to say astern, for the brig was drifting stern foremost,—and that was in an eddy under a bluff, which bluff lies at an angle in the reach, where it is no uncommon thing for craft to be cast ashore, after they have passed all the more imposing and more visible dangers above. It was in escaping this danger, and in recovering the command of his vessel, that Spike now manifested the sort of stuff of which he was really made in emergencies of this sort. The

yards were all sharp up when the accident occurred, and springing to the lee-braces, just as a man winks when his eye is menaced, he seized the weather fore-brace with his own hands, and began to round in the yard, shouting out to the man at the wheel to "port his helm" at the same time. Some of the people flew to his assistance, and the yards were not only squared, but braced a little up on the other tack, in much less time than we have taken to relate the evolution. Mulford attended to the main-sheet, and succeeded in getting the boom out in the right direction. Although the wind was, in truth, very light, the velocity of the drift filled the canvas, and, taking the arrow-like current on her lee-bow, the Swash, like a frantic steed that is alarmed with the wreck made by his own madness, came under command, and sheered out into the stream again, where she could drift clear of the apprehended danger astern.

"Sound the pumps," called out Spike to Mulford, the instant he had regained his seat in the saddle. Harry sprang amidships to obey, and the eye of every mariner in that

vessel was on the young man, as, in the midst of a death-like silence, he performed this all-important duty. It was like the physician's feeling the pulse of his patient before he pronounces on the degree of his danger.

"Well, sir?" cried out Spike, impatiently, as the rod re-appeared.

"All right, sir," answered Harry, cheerfully. "The well is nearly empty."

"Hold on a moment longer, and give the water time to find its way amidships, if there be any."

The mate remained perched upon the pump in order to comply, while Spike and his people, who now breathed more freely again, improved the leisure to brace up and haul aft to the new course.

"Biddy," said Mrs. Budd, considerately, during this pause in the incidents, "you needn't scream any longer. The danger seems to be past, and you may get up off the deck now. See, I have let go of the mast. The pumps have been sounded, and are found tight."

Biddy, like an obedient and respectful servant, did as directed, quite satisfied if the

pumps were tight. It was some little time, to be sure, before she was perfectly certain whether she were alive or not; but, once certain of this circumstance, her alarm very sensibly abated, and she became reasonable. As for Mulford, he dropped the sounding-rod again, and had the same cheering report to make.

"The brig is as tight as a bottle, sir."

"So much the better," answered Spike. "I never had such a whirl in her before in my life, and I thought she was going to stop and pass the night there. That 's the very spot on which 'The Hussar' frigate was wrecked."

"So I have heard, sir. But she drew so much water that she hit slap against the rock, and started a butt. We merely touched on its top with our fore-foot, and slid off."

This was the simple explanation of the Swash's escape: and everybody being now well assured that no harm had been done, things fell into their old and regular train again. As for Spike, his gallantry, notwithstanding, was upset for some hours, and glad enough was he when he saw all three of his

passengers quit the deck to go below. Mrs. Budd's spirits had been so much agitated, that she told Rose she would go down into the cabin and rest a few minutes on its sofa. We say sofa, for that article of furniture now-a-days is far more common in vessels than it was thirty years ago in the dwellings of the country.

"There, Mulford," growled Spike, pointing ahead of the brig to an object on the water that was about half a mile ahead of them, "there's that confounded boat—d'ye see? I should like of all things to give it the slip. There's a chap in that boat I don't like."

"I don't see how that can be very well done, sir, unless we anchor, repass the Gate at the turn of the tide, and go to sea by the way of Sandy Hook."

"That will never do. I've no wish to be parading the brig before the town. You see, Mulford, nothing can be more innocent and proper than the Molly Swash, as you know from having sailed in her these twelve-months. You'll give her that character, I'll be sworn?"

"I know no harm of her, Captain Spike, and hope I never shall."

"No, sir,—you know no harm of her, nor does any one else. A nursing infant is not more innocent than the Molly Swash, or could have a clearer character, if nothing but truth was said of her. But the world is so much given to lying, that one of the old saints, of whom we read in the good book, such as Calvin and John Rogers, would be vilified if he lived in these times. Then it must be owned, Mr. Mulford, whatever may be the real innocence of the brig, she has a most desperate wicked look."

"Why, yes, sir,—it must be owned she is what we sailors call a wicked-looking craft. But some of Uncle Sam's cruisers have that appearance also.

"I know it—I know it, sir, and think nothing of looks myself. Men are often deceived in me by *my* looks, which have none of your 'long-shore softness about 'em, perhaps; but my mother used to say, I was one of the most tender-hearted boys she had ever heard spoken of—like one of the babes in the wood, as it

might be. But mankind go so much by appearances, that I do not like to trust the brig too much afore their eyes. Now, should we be seen in the lower bay waiting for a wind, or for the ebb-tide to make to carry us over the bar, ten to one but some *philotropic* or other would be off with a complaint to the district attorney that we looked like a slaver, and have us all fetched up to be tried for our lives as pirates. No, no—I like to keep the brig in out-of-the-way places, where she can give no offence to your 'tropics, whether they be philos, or of any other sort."

"Well, sir, we are to the eastward of the Gate, and all's safe. That boat cannot bring us up."

"You forget, Mr. Mulford, the revenue craft that steamed up on the ebb. That vessel must be off Sands' Point by this time, and *she* may hear something to our disparagement from the feller in the boat, and take it into her smoky head to walk us back to town. I wish we were well to the eastward of that steamer! But there's no use in lamentations. If there is really any danger, it's some distance ahead yet, thank heaven!"

"You have no fears of the man who calls himself Jack Tier, Captain Spike?"

"None in the world. That feller, as I remember him, was a little bustlin' chap that I kept in the cabin as a sort of steward's mate. There was neither good nor harm in him, to the best of my recollection. But Josh can tell us all about him. Just give Josh a call."

The best thing in the known history of Spike was the fact that his steward had sailed with him for more than twenty years. Where he had picked up Josh no one could say but Josh and himself; and neither chose to be very communicative on the subject. But Josh had certainly been with him as long as he had sailed the Swash, and that was from a time actually anterior to the birth of Mulford. The mate soon had the negro in the council.

"I say, Josh," asked Spike, "do you happen to remember such a hand aboard here as one Jack Tier?"

"Lor' bless you, yes, sir—'members he as well as I do the pea soup that was burnt, and which you t'rowed all over him, to scald him for punishment."

"I've had to do that so often, to one careless fellow or other, that the circumstance does n't recall the man. I remember him—but not as clear as I could wish. How long did he sail with us?"

"Sebberal v'y'ge, sir, and got left ashore down on the main, one night when 'e boat war obliged to shove off in a hurry. Yes, 'members little Jack, right well I does."

"Did you see the man that spoke us from the wharf, and hailed for this very Jack Tier?"

"I see'd a man, sir, dat was won'erful Jack Tier built like, sir, but I didn't hear the conversation, habbin' the ladies to 'tend to. But Jack was oncommon short in his floor timbers, sir, and had no length of keel at all. His beam was won'erful for his length, altogedder—what you call jolly-boat or bum-boat build, and was only good afore 'e wind, Captain Spike."

"Was he good for anything aboard ship, Josh? Worth heaving-to for, should he try to get aboard of us again?"

"Why, sir, can't say much for him in dat fashion. Jack *was* handy in the cabin, and capital feller to carry soup from the galley, aft.

You see, sir, he was so low-rigged that the brig's lurchin' and pitchin' couldn't get him off his pins, and he stood up like a church in the heaviest wea'der. Yes, sir, Jack was right good for *dat.*"

Spike mused a moment—then he rolled the tobacco over in his mouth, and added, in the way a man speaks when his mind is made up—

"Ay, ay!—I see into the fellow. He'll make a handy lady's maid, and we want such a chap just now. It's better to have an old friend aboard, than to be pickin' up strangers, 'long shore. So should this Jack Tier come off to us, from any of the islands or points ahead, Mr. Mulford, you'll round to and take him aboard. As for the steamer, if she will only pass out into the Sound where there's room, it shall go hard with us but I get to the eastward of her, without speaking. On the other hand, should she anchor this side of the Fort, I'll not attempt to pass her. There is deep water inside of most of the islands, I know, and we'll try and dodge her in that way, if no better offer. I've no more reason than another craft to

fear a government vessel, but the sight of one of them makes me oncomfortable; that's all."

Mulford shrugged his shoulders and remained silent, perceiving that his commander was not disposed to pursue the subject any further. In the meantime, the brig had passed beyond the influence of the bluff, and was beginning to feel a stronger breeze, that was coming down the wide opening of Flushing Bay. As the tide still continued strong in her favour, and her motion through the water was getting to be four or five knots, there was every prospect of her soon reaching Whitestone, the point where the tides meet, and where it would become necessary to anchor; unless, indeed, the wind, which was now getting to the southward and eastward, should come round more to the south. All this Spike and his mate discussed together, while the people were clearing the decks, and making the preparations that are customary on board a vessel before she gets into rough water.

By this time, it was ascertained that the brig had received no damage by her salute of the Pot Rock, and every trace of uneasiness

on that account was removed. But Spike kept harping on the boat, and "the pilot-looking chap who was in her." As they passed Riker's Island, all hands expected a boat would put off with a pilot, or to demand pilotage; but none came, and the Swash now seemed released from all her present dangers, unless some might still be connected with the revenue-steamer. To retard her advance, however, the wind came out a smart working breeze from the southward and eastward, compelling her to make "long legs and short ones" on her way towards Whitestone.

"This is beating the wind, Rosy dear," said Mrs. Budd, complacently, she and her niece having returned to the deck a few minutes after this change had taken place. "Your respected uncle did a great deal of this in his time, and was very successful in it. I have heard him say, that in one of his voyages between Liverpool and New York, he beat the wind by a whole fortnight, every body talking of it in the insurance offices, as if it was a miracle."

"Ay, ay, Madam Budd," put in Spike, "I'll

answer for that. They're desperate talkers in and about them there insurance offices in Wall Street. Great gossips be they, and they think they know every thing. Now just because this brig is a little old or so, and was built for a privateer in the last war, they'd refuse to rate her as even B, No. 2, and my blessing on 'em."

"Yes, B, No. 2, that's just what your dear uncle used to call me, Rosy—his charming B, No. 2, or Betsy, No. 2; particularly when he was in a loving mood. Captain Spike, did you ever beat the wind in a long voyage?"

"I can't say I ever did, Mrs. Budd," answered Spike, looking grimly around, to ascertain if any one dared to smile at his passenger's mistake; "especially for so long a pull as from New York to Liverpool."

"Then your uncle use to boast of the Rose in Bloom's wearing and attacking. She would attack any thing that came in her way, no matter who, and, as for wearing, I think he once told me she *would* wear just what she had a mind to, like any human being."

Rose was a little mystified, but she looked

vexed at the same time, as if she distrusted all was not right.

"I remember all my sea education," continued the unsuspecting widow, "as if it had been learnt yesterday. Beating the wind and attacking ship, my poor Mr. Budd used to say, were nice manœuvres, and required most of his tactics, especially in heavy weather. Did you know, Rosy dear, that sailors weigh the weather, and know when it is heavy and when it is light?"

"I did not, aunt; nor do I understand how it can very well be done."

"Oh! child, before you have been at sea a week, you will learn so many things that are new, and get so many ideas of which you never had any notion before, that you'll not be the same person. My captain had an instrument he called a thermometer, and with that he used to weigh the weather, and then he would write down in the log-book 'to-day, heavy weather, or to-morrow, light weather,' just as it happened, and that helped him mightily along in his voyages."

"Mrs. Budd had merely mistaken the name

of the instrument—the 'barometer' is what she wished to say," put in Mulford opportunely.

Rose looked grateful, as well as relieved. Though profoundly ignorant on these subjects herself, she had always suspected her aunt's knowledge. It was, consequently, grateful to her to ascertain that, in this instance, the old lady's mistake had been so trifling.

"Well, it may have been the barometer, for I know he had them both," resumed the aunt. "Barometer, or thermometer, it don't make any great difference; or quadrant, or sextant. They are all instruments, and sometimes he used one, and sometimes another. Sailors take on board the sun, too, and have an instrument for that, as well as one to weigh the weather with. Sometimes they take on board the stars, and the moon, and 'fill their ships with the heavenly bodies,' as I've heard my dear husband say, again and again! But the most curious thing at sea, as all the sailors tell me, is crossing the line, and I do hope we shall cross the line, Rosy, that you and I may see it."

"What is the line, aunty, and how do vessels cross it?"

"The line, my dear, is a place in the ocean where the earth is divided into two parts, one part being called the North Pole and the other part the South Pole. Neptune lives near this line, and he allows no vessel to go out of one pole into the other without paying it a visit. Never! never!—he would as soon think of living on dry land, as think of letting even a canoe pass, without visiting it."

"Do you suppose there is such a being, really, as Neptune, aunty?"

"To be sure I do; he is king of the sea. Why shouldn't there be? The sea must have a king, as well as the land."

"The sea may be a republic, aunty, like this country; then no king is necessary. I have always supposed Neptune to be an imaginary being."

"Oh! that's impossible—the sea is no republic; there are but two republics, America and Texas. I've heard that the sea is a highway, it is true—the 'highway of nations,' I believe it is called, and that must mean some-

thing particular. But my poor Mr. Budd always told me that Neptune was king of the seas, and *he* was always so accurate, you might depend on every thing he said. Why, he called his last Newfoundland dog Neptune, and do you think, Rosy, that your dear uncle would call his dog after an imaginary being?—and he a man to beat the wind, and attack ship, and take the sun, moon, and stars aboard! No, no, child; fanciful folk may see imaginary beings, but solid folk see solid beings."

Even Spike was dumbfounded at this, and there is no knowing what he might have said, had not an old sea-dog, who had just come out of the fore-topmast cross-trees, come aft, and, hitching up his trousers with one hand while he touched his hat with the other, said, with immoveable gravity,

"The revenue-steamer has brought up just under the fort, Captain Spike."

"How do you know that, Bill?" demanded the captain, with a rapidity that showed how completely Mrs. Budd and all her absurdities were momentarily forgotten.

"I was up on the fore-topgallant yard, sir, a

bit ago, just to look to the strap of the jewel-block, which wants some service on it, and I see'd her over the land, blowing off steam and takin' in her kites. Afore I got out of the cross-trees, she was head to wind under bare poles, and if she hadn't anchored, she was about to do so. I'm sartin 'twas she, sir, and that she was about to bring up."

Spike gave a long, low whistle, after his fashion, and he walked away from the females, with the air of a man who wanted room to think in. Half a minute later, he called out—

"Stand by to shorten sail, boys. Man fore-clewgarnets, flying jib down-haul, top-gallant sheets, and gaff-topsail gear. In with 'em all, my lads—in with every thing, with a will."

An order to deal with the canvas in any way, on board ship, immediately commands the whole attention of all whose duty it is to attend to such matters, and there was an end of all discourse while the Swash was shortening sail. Every body understood, too, that it was to gain

time, and prevent the brig from reaching Throg's Neck sooner than was desirable.

"Keep the brig off," called out Spike, "and let her ware—we're too busy to tack just now."

The man at the wheel knew very well what was wanted, and he put his helm up, instead of putting it down, as he might have done without this injunction. As this change brought the brig before the wind, and Spike was in no hurry to luff up on the other tack, the Swash soon ran over a mile of the distance she had already made, putting her back that much on her way to the Neck. It is out of our power to say what the people of the different craft in sight thought of all this, but an opportunity soon offered of putting them on a wrong scent. A large coasting schooner, carrying everything that would draw on a wind, came sweeping under the stern of the Swash, and hailed.

"Has anything happened, on board that brig?" demanded her master.

"Man overboard," answered Spike—"you haven't seen his hat, have you?"

"No—no," came back, just as the schooner, in her outward course, swept beyond the reach of the voice. Her people collected together, and one or two ran up the rigging a short distance, stretching their necks, on the look-out for the "poor fellow," but they were soon called down to "'bout ship." In less than five minutes, another vessel, a rakish coasting sloop, came within hail.

"Didn't that brig strike the Pot Rock, in passing the gate?" demanded her captain.

"Ay, ay!—and a devil of a rap she got, too."

This satisfied *him;* there being nothing remarkable in a vessel's acting strangely that had hit the Pot Rock in passing Hell Gate.

"I think we may get in our mainsail on the strength of this, Mr. Mulford," said Spike. "There can be nothing oncommon in a craft's shortening sail, that has a man overboard, and which has hit the Pot Rock. I wonder I never thought of all this before."

"Here is a skiff trying to get alongside of us, Captain Spike," called out the boatswain.

"Skiff be d—d! I want no skiff here."

"The man that calls himself Jack Tier is in her, sir."

"The d—l he is!" cried Spike, springing over to the opposite side of the deck to take a look for himself. To his infinite satisfaction he perceived that Tier was alone in the skiff, with the exception of a negro, who pulled its skulls, and that this was a very different boat from that which had glanced through Hell Gate, like an arrow darting from its bow.

"Luff, and shake your topsail," called out Spike. "Get a rope there to throw to this skiff."

The orders were obeyed, and Jack Tier, with his clothes-bag, was soon on the deck of the Swash. As for the skiff and the negro, they were cast adrift the instant the latter had received his quarter. The meeting between Spike and his quondam steward's mate was a little remarkable. Each stood looking intently at the other, as if to note the changes which time had made. We cannot say that Spike's hard, red, selfish countenance betrayed any great feeling, though such was not the case with Jack Tier's. The last, a lymphatic, puffy sort of a person at

the best, seemed really a little touched, and he either actually brushed a tear from his eye, or he affected so to do.

"So you are my old ship-mate, Jack Tier, are ye?" exclaimed Spike, in a half-patronizing half-hesitating way—"and you want to try the old craft ag'in. Give us a leaf of your log, and let me know where you have been this many a day, and what you have been about? Keep the brig off, Mr. Mulford. We are in no particular hurry to reach Throg's, you'll remember, sir."

Tier gave an account of his proceedings, which could have no interest with the reader. His narrative was anything but very clear, and it was delivered in a cracked, octave sort of a voice, such as little dapper people not unfrequently enjoy—tones between those of a man and a boy. The substance of the whole story was this. Tier had been left ashore, as sometimes happens to sailors, and, by a necessary consequence, was left to shift for himself. After making some vain endeavours to rejoin his brig, he had shipped in one vessel after another, until he accidently found himself in the port of

New York, at the same time as the Swash. He know'd he never should be truly happy ag'in until he could once more get aboard the old hussy, and had hurried up to the wharf, where he understood the brig was lying. As he came in sight, he saw she was about to cast off, and, dropping his clothes-bag, he had made the best of his way to the wharf, where the conversation passed that has been related.

"The gentleman on the wharf was about to take boat, to go through the Gate," concluded Tier, "and so I begs a passage of him. He was good-natured enough to wait until I could find my bag, and as soon a'terwards as the men could get their grog we shoved off. The Molly was just getting in behind Blackwell's as we left the wharf, and, having four good oars, and the shortest road, we come out into the Gate just ahead on you. My eye! what a place that is to go through in a boat, and on a strong flood! The gentleman, who watched the brig as a cat watches a mouse, says you struck on the Pot, as he called it, but I says 'no,' for the Molly Swash was never know'd to hit rock or shoal in my time aboard her."

"And where did you quit that gentleman, and what has become of him?" asked Spike.

"He put me ashore on that point above us, where I see'd a nigger with his skiff, who I thought would be willin' to 'arn his quarter by giving me a cast alongside. So here I am, and a long pull I've had to get here."

As this was said, Jack removed his hat and wiped his brow with a handkerchief, which, if it had never seen better days, had doubtless been cleaner. After this, he looked about him, with an air not entirely free from exultation.

This conversation had taken place in the gangway, a somewhat public place, and Spike beckoned to his recruit to walk aft, where he might be questioned without be overheard.

"What became of the gentleman in the boat, as you call him?" demanded Spike.

"He pulled ahead, seeming to be in a hurry."

"Do you know who he was?"

"Not a bit of it, I never saw the man before, and he didn't tell me his business, sir."

"Had he anything like a silver oar about him?"

"I saw nothing of the sort, Captain Spike, and knows nothing consarning him."

"What sort of a boat was he in, and where did he get it?"

"Well, as to the boat, sir, I *can* say a word, seein' it was so much to my mind, and pulled so wonderful smart. It was a light ship's yawl, with four oars, and came round the Hook just a'ter you had got the brig's head round to the eastward. You must have seen it, I should think, though it kept close in with the wharves, as if it wished to be snug."

"Then the gentleman, as you call him, expected *that* very boat to take him off?"

"I suppose so, sir, because it *did* come and take him off. That's all I know about it."

"Had you no jaw with the gentleman? You wasn't mum the whole time you was in the boat with him?"

"Not a bit of it, sir. Silence and I doesn't agree together long, so we talked most of the time."

"And what did the stranger say of the brig?"

"Lord, sir, he catechised me like as if I had been a child at Sunday-school. He asked me how long I had sailed in her; what ports we'd visited, and what trade we'd been in. You can't think the sight of questions he put, and how cur'ous he was for the answers."

"And what did you tell in you answers? You said nothin' about our call down on the Spanish Main, the time you were left ashore, I hope, Jack?"

"Not I, sir. I played him off surprisin'ly. He got nothin' to count upon out of me. Though I *do* owe the Molly Swash a grudge, I'm not goin' to betray her."

"You owe the Molly Swash a grudge! Have I taken an enemy on board her, then?"

Jack started, and seemed sorry he had said so much; while Spike eyed him keenly. But the answer set all right. It was not given, however, without a moment for recollection.

"Oh, you knows what I mean, sir. I owe the old hussy a grudge for having desarted me like; but its only a love quarrel atween us. The old Molly will never come to harm by my means."

"I hope not, Jack; the man that wrongs the craft he sails in can never be a true-hearted sailor. Stick by your ship in all weathers is my rule, and a good rule it is to go by. But what did you tell the stranger?"

"Oh! I told him I'd been six v'y'ges in the brig. The first was to Madagascar—"

"The d—l you did! Was he soft enough to believe that?"

"That's more than I knows, sir. I can only tell you what I *said:* I don't pretend to know how much he *believed.*"

"Heave ahead—what next?"

"Then I told him we went to Kamschatka for gold-dust and ivory."

"Whe-e-e-w! What did the man say to that?"

"Why, he smiled a bit, and a'ter that he seemed more cur'ous than ever to hear all about it. I told him my third v'y'ge was to Canton, with a cargo of broom-corn, where we took in salmon and dun-fish for home. A'ter that we went to Norway with ice, and brought back silks and money. Our next run was to the Havana, with salt and 'nips—"

"'Nips? what the devil be they?"

"Turnips, you knows, sir. We always calls 'em 'nips in cargo. At the Havana I told him we took in leather and jerked beef, and came home. Oh! he got nothin' from me, Captain Spike, that'll ever do the brig a morsel of harm!"

"I am glad of that, Jack. You must know enough of the seas to understand that a close mouth is sometimes better for a vessel than a clean bill of health. Was there nothing said about the revenue-steamer?"

"Now you name her, sir, I believe there was—ay, ay, sir, the gentleman *did* say, if the steamer fetched up to the westward of the fort, that he should overhaul her without difficulty, on this flood."

"That'll do, Jack: that'll all do, my honest fellow. Go below, and tell Josh to take you into the cabin again, as steward's mate. You're rather too Dutch built, in your old age, to do much aloft."

One can hardly say whether Jack received this remark as complimentary, or not. He looked a little glum, for a man may be as

round as a barrel, and wish to be thought genteel and slender; but he went below, in quest of Josh, without making any reply.

The succeeding movements of Spike appeared to be much influenced by what he had just heard. He kept the brig under short canvas for near two hours, sheering about in the same place, taking care to tell everything which spoke him that he had lost a man overboard. In this way, not only the tide, but the day itself, was nearly spent. About the time the former began to lose his strength, however, the fore-course and the main-sail were got on the brigantine, with the intention of working her up toward Whitestone, where the tides meet, and near which the revenue steamer was known to be anchored. We say near, though it was, in fact, a mile or two more to the eastward, and close to the extremity of the Point.

Notwithstanding these demonstrations of a wish to work to windward, Spike was really in no hurry. He had made up his mind to pass the steamer in the dark, if possible, and the night promised to favour him; but, in order to do this, it might be necessary not to

come in sight of her at all; or, at least, not until the obscurity should in some measure conceal his rig and character. In consequence of this plan, the Swash made no great progress even after she had got sail on her, on her old course. The wind lessened, too, after the sun went down, though it still hung to the eastward, or nearly ahead. As the tide gradually lost its force, moreover, the set to windward became less and less, until it finally disappeared altogether.

There is necessarily a short reach in this passage, where it is always slack water, so far as current is concerned. This is precisely where the tides meet, or, as has been intimated, at Whitestone, which is somewhat more than a mile to the westward of Throgmorton's Neck, near the point of which stands Fort Schuyler, one of the works recently erected for the defence of New York. Off the pitch of the point, nearly mid-channel, had the steamer anchored, a fact of which Spike had made certain, by going aloft himself, and reconnoitering her over the land, before it had got too dark to do so. He entertained no

manner of doubt that this vessel was in waiting for him, and he well knew there was good reason for it; but he would not return and attempt the passage to sea by way of Sandy Hook. His manner of regarding the whole matter was cool and judicious. The distance to the Hook was too great to be made in such short nights ere the return of day, and he had no manner of doubt he was watched for in that direction, as well as in this. Then he was particularly unwilling to show his craft at all in front of the town, even in the night. Moreover, he had ways of his own for effecting his purposes, and this was the very spot and time to put them in execution.

While these things were floating in his mind, Mrs. Budd and her handsome niece were making preparations for passing the night, aided by Biddy Noon. The old lady was factotum, or factota, as it might be most classical to call her, though we are entirely without authorities on the subject, and was just as self-complacent and ambitious of seawomanship below decks, as she had been above board. The effect, however, gave Spike great satis-

faction, since it kept her out of sight, and left him more at liberty to carry out his own plans. About nine, however, the good woman came on deck, intending to take a look at the weather, like a skilful marineress as she was, before she turned in. Not a little was she astonished at what she then and there beheld, as she whispered to Rose and Biddy, both of whom stuck close to her side, feeling the want of good pilotage, no doubt, in strange waters.

The Molly Swash was still under her canvas, though very little sufficed for her present purposes. She was directly off Whitestone, and was making easy stretches across the passage, or river, as it is called, having nothing set but her huge fore-and-aft mainsail and the jib. Under this sail she worked like a top, and Spike sometimes fancied she travelled too fast for his purposes, the night-air having thickened the canvas as usual, until it "held the wind as a bottle holds water." There was nothing in this, however, to attract the particular attention of the ship-master's widow, a sail, more or less, being connected with observation much too critical for her schooling,

nice as the last had been. She was surprised to find the men stripping the brig forward, and converting her into a schooner. Nor was this done in a loose and slovenly manner, under favour of the obscurity. On the contrary, it was so well executed that it might have deceived even a seaman under a noon-day sun, provided the vessel were a mile or two distant. The manner in which the metamorphosis was made was as follows. The studding-sail booms had been taken off the topsail yard, in order to shorten it to the eye, and the yard itself was swayed up about half-mast, to give it the appearance of a schooner's fore-yard. The brig's real lower yard was lowered on the bulwarks, while her royal yard was sent down altogether, and the topgallant mast was lowered until the heel rested on the topsail yard, all of which, in the night, gave the gear forward very much the appearance of that of a fore-topsail schooner, instead of that of a half-rigged brig, as the craft really was. As the vessel carried a try-sail on her foremast, it answered very well, in the dark, to represent a schooner's foresail. Several other little dis-

positions of this nature were made, about which it might weary the uninitiated to read, but which will readily suggest themselves to the mind of a sailor.

These alterations were far advanced when the females reappeared on deck. They at once attracted their attention, and the captain's widow felt the imperative necessity, as connected with her professional character, of proving the same. She soon found Spike, who was bustling around the deck, now looking around to see that his brig was kept in the channel, now and then issuing an order to complete her disguise.

"Captain Spike, what *can* be the meaning of all these changes? The tamper of your vessel is so much altered that I declare I should not have known her!"

"Is it, by George! Then, she is just in the state I want her to be in."

"But why have you done it—and what does it all mean?"

"Oh, Molly's going to bed for the night, and she's only undressing herself — that's all."

"Yes, Rosy dear, Captain Spike is right. I remember that my poor Mr. Budd used to talk about the Rose in Bloom having her clothes on, and her clothes off, just as if she was a born woman! But don't you mean to navigate at all in the night, Captain Spike? Or will the brig navigate without sails?"

"That 's it—she 's just as good in the dark, under one sort of canvas, as under another. So, Mr. Mulford, we 'll take a reef in that mainsail; it will bring it nearer to the size of our new foresail, and seem more ship-shape and Brister fashion—then. I think she 'll do, as the night is getting to be rather darkish."

"Captain Spike," said the boatswain, who had been sent to look out for that particular change—"the brig begins to feel the new tide and sets to windward."

"Let her go, then—now is as good a time as another. We 've got to run the gauntlet, and the sooner it is run the better."

As the moment seemed propitious, not only Mulford, but all the people, heard this order with satisfaction. The night was star-light, though not very clear. Objects on the water,

however, were more visible than those on the land, while those on the last could be seen well enough even from the brig, though in confused and somewhat shapeless piles. When the Swash was brought close by the wind, she had just got into the last reach of the "river," or that which runs parallel with The Neck for near a mile, doubling where the Sound expands itself, gradually, to a breadth of many leagues. Still the navigation at the entrance of this end of the Sound was intricate and somewhat dangerous, rendering it indispensable for a vessel of any size to make a crooked course. The wind stood at south-east, and was very scant to lay through the reach with, while the tide was so slack as barely to possess a visible current at that place. The steamer lay directly off the Point, mid-channel, as mentioned, showing lights, to mark her position to anything which might be passing in or out. The great thing was to get by her without exciting suspicion. As all on board, the females excepted, knew what their captain was at, the attempt was made amid an anxious and profound silence; or if any one spoke at all, it was only

to give an order in a low tone, or its answer in a simple monosyllable.

Although her aunt assured her that everything which had been done already, and which was now doing, was quite in rule, the quick-eyed and quick-witted Rose noted these unusual proceedings, and had an opinion of her own on the subject. Spike had gone forward, and posted himself on the weather-side of the forecastle, where he could get the clearest look ahead, and there he remained most of the time, leaving Mulford on the quarter-deck, to work the vessel. Perceiving this, she managed to get near the mate, without attracting her aunt's attention, and at the same time out of ear-shot.

"Why is everybody so still and seemingly so anxious, Harry Mulford?" she asked, speaking in a low tone herself, as if desirous of conforming to a common necessity. "Is there any new danger here? I thought the Gate had been passed altogether, some hours ago?"

"So it has. D'ye see that large dark mass on the water, off the Point, which seems almost as huge as the fort, with lights above it?

That is a revenue-steamer which came out of York a few hours before us. We wish to get past her without being troubled by any of her questions."

"And what do any in this brig care about her questions? They can be answered, surely."

"Ay, ay, Rose—they *may* be answered, as you say, but the answers sometimes are unsatisfactory. Captain Spike, for some reason or other, is uneasy, and would rather not have anything to say to her. He has the greatest aversion to speaking the smallest craft when on a coast."

"And that 's the reason he has undressed his Molly, as he calls her, that he might not be known."

Mulford turned his head quickly toward his companion, as if surprised by her quickness of apprehension, but he had too just a sense of his duty to make any reply. Instead of pursuing the discourse, he adroitly contrived to change it, by pointing out to Rose the manner in which they were getting on, which seemed to be very successfully.

Although the Swash was under much re-

duced canvas, she glided along with great ease and with considerable rapidity of motion. The heavy night-air kept her canvas distended, and the weatherly set of the tide, trifling as it yet was, pressed her up against the breeze, so as to turn all to account. It was apparent enough, by the manner in which objects on the land were passed, that the crisis was fast approaching. Rose rejoined her aunt, in order to await the result, in nearly breathless expectation. At that moment, she would have given the world to be safe on shore. This wish was not the consequence of any constitutional timidity, for Rose was much the reverse from timid, but it was the fruit of a newly awakened and painful, though still vague, suspicion. Happy, thrice happy was it for one of her naturally confiding and guileless nature, that distrust *was* thus opportunely awakened, for she was without a guardian competent to advise and guide her youth, as circumstances required.

The brig was not long in reaching the passage that opened to the Sound. It is probable she did this so much the sooner because Spike kept her a little off the wind, with a view of

not passing too near the steamer. At this point, the direction of the passage changes at nearly a right angle, the revenue-steamer lying on a line with the Neck, and leaving a sort of bay in the angle, for the Swash to enter. The land was somewhat low in all directions but one, and that was by drawing a straight line from the Point, through the steamer, to the Long Island shore. On the latter, and in that quarter, rose a bluff of considerable elevation, with deep water quite near it; and, under the shadows of that bluff, Spike intended to perform his nicest evolutions. He saw that the revenue vessel had let her fires go down, and that she was entirely without steam. Under canvas, he had no doubt of beating her hand over hand, could he once fairly get to windward, and then she was at anchor, and would lose some time in getting under way, should she even commence a pursuit. It was all important, therefore, to gain as much to windward as possible, before the people of the government vessel took the alarm.

There can be no doubt that the alterations made on board the Swash served her a very

good turn on this occasion. Although the night could not be called positively dark, there was sufficient obscurity to render her hull confused and indistinct at any distance, and this so much the more when seen from the steamer outside, or between her and the land. All this Spike very well understood, and largely calculated on. In effect he was not deceived; the look-outs on board the revenue vessel could trace little of the vessel that was approaching beyond the spars and sails which rose above the shores, and these seemed to be the spars and sails of a common foretopsail schooner. As this was not the sort of craft for which they were on the watch, no suspicion was awakened, nor did any reports go from the quarter-deck to the cabin. The steamer had her quarter watches, and officers of the deck, like a vessel of war, the discipline of which was fairly enough imitated, but even a man-of-war may be over-reached on an occasion.

Spike was only great in a crisis, and then merely as a seaman. He understood his calling to its minutiæ, and he understood the

Molly Swash better than he understood any other craft that floated. For more than twenty years had he sailed in her, and the careful parent does not better understand the humours of the child, than he understood exactly what might be expected from his brig. His satisfaction sensibly increased, therefore, as she stole along the land, toward the angle mentioned, without a sound audible but the gentle gurgling of the water, stirred by the stem, and which sounded like the ripple of the gentlest wave, as it washes the shingle of some placid beach.

As the brig drew nearer to the bluff, the latter brought the wind more a-head as respected the desired course. This was unfavourable, but it did not disconcert her watchful commander.

"Let her come round, Mr. Mulford," said this pilot-captain in a low voice. "We are as near in as we ought to go."

The helm was put down, the head-sheets started, and away into the wind shot the Molly Swash, forereaching famously in stays, and, of course, gaining so much on her true course. In a minute she was round, and filled on the

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other tack. Spike was now so near the land, that he could perceive the tide was beginning to aid him, and that his weatherly set was getting to be considerable. Delighted at this, he walked aft, and told Mulford to go about again as soon as the vessel had sufficient way to make sure of her in stays. The mate inquired if he did not think the revenue people might suspect something, unless they stood further out toward mid-channel; but Spike reminded him that they would be apt to think the schooner was working up under the southern shore, because the ebb first made there. This reason satisfied Mulford; and, as soon as they were half-way between the bluff and the steamer, the Swash was again tacked, with her head to the former. This manœuvre was executed when the brig was about two hundred yards from the steamer, a distance that was sufficient to preserve, under all the circumstances, the disguise she had assumed.

"They do not suspect us, Harry!" whispered Spike to his mate. "We shall get to windward of 'em, as sartain as the breeze stands. That boatin' gentleman might as well

have staid at home, as for any good his hurry done him or his employers."

"Whom do you suppose him to be, Captain Spike?"

"Who?—a feller that lives by his own wicked deeds. No matter who he is. An informer, perhaps. At any rate, he is not the man to outwit the Molly Swash and her old, stupid, foolish master and owner, Stephen Spike. Luff, Mr. Mulford, luff. Now's the time to make the most of your leg—luff her up and shake her. She is setting to windward fast—the ebb is sucking along that bluff like a boy at a molasses' hogshead. All she can drift on this tack is clear gain: there is no hurry, so long as they are asleep aboard the steamer. That's it—make a half-board at once, but take care and don't come round. As soon as we are fairly clear of the bluff, and open the bay that makes up behind it, we shall get the wind more to the southward, and have a fine long leg for the next stretch."

Of course Mulford obeyed, throwing the brig up into the wind, and allowing her to set to windward, but filling again on the same

tack, as ordered. This, of course, delayed her progress toward the land, and protracted the agony; but it carried the vessel in the direction she most wished to go, while it kept her not only end-on to the steamer, but in a line with the bluff, and consequently in the position most favourable to conceal her true character. Presently the bay mentioned, which was several miles deep, opened darkly toward the south, and the wind came directly out of it, or more to the southward. At this moment the Swash was near a quarter of mile from the steamer, and all that distance dead to windward of her, as the breeze came out of the bay. Spike tacked his vessel himself now, and got her her head up so high, that she brought the steamer on her lee-quarter, and looked away toward the island which lies northwardly from the Point, and quite near to which all vessels of any draught of water are compelled to pass, even with the fairest winds.

"Shake the reef out of the mainsail, Mr. Mulford," said Spike, when the Swash was fairly in motion again on this advantageous tack. "We shall pass well to windward of

the steamer, and may as well begin to open our cloth again."

"Is it not a little too soon, sir?" Mulford ventured to remonstrate. "The reef is a large one, and will make a great difference in the size of the sail."

"They 'll not see it at this distance. No, no, sir; shake out the reef, and sway away on the topgallant-mast-rope. I 'm for bringing the Molly Swash into her old shape again, and make her look handsome once more."

"Do you dress the brig, as well as undress her, o' nights, Captain Spike?" inquired the ship-master's relict, a little puzzled with this fickleness of purpose. "I do not believe my poor Mr. Budd ever did that."

"Fashions change, madam, with the time—ay, ay, sir—shake out the reef, and sway away on that mast-rope, boys, as soon as you have manned it. We 'll convart our schooner into a brig again."

As these orders were obeyed, of course, a general bustle now took place. Mulford soon had the reef out, and the sail distended to the utmost, while the topgallant-mast was soon

up and fidded. The next thing was to sway upon the fore-yard, and get that into its place. The people were busied at this duty, when a hoarse hail came across the water on the heavy night air.

"Brig ahoy!" was the call.

"Sway upon that fore-yard," said Spike, unmoved by this summons. "Start it—start it at once."

"The steamer hails us, sir," said the mate.

"Not she. She is hailing a brig: we are a schooner yet."

A moment of active exertion succeeded, during which the fore-yard went into its place. Then came a second hail.

"Schooner ahoy!" was the summons this time.

"The steamer hails us again, Captain Spike."

"The devil a bit! We're a brig now, and she hails a schooner. Come, boys, bestir yourselves, and get the canvas on Molly for-'ard. Loose the fore-course before you quit the yard there, then up aloft and loosen everything you can find."

All was done as ordered, and done rapidly, as is ever the case on board a well-ordered vessel, when there is occasion for exertion. That occasion now appeared to exist in earnest; for while the men were sheeting home the topsail, a flash of light illuminated the scene, when the roar of a gun came booming across the water, succeeded by the very distinct whistling of its shot. We regret that the relict of the late Captain Budd did not behave exactly as became a ship-master's widow, under fire. Instead of remaining silent and passive, even while frightened, as was the case with Rose, she screamed quite as loud as she had previously done that very day in Hell Gate. It appeared to Spike, indeed, that practice was making her perfect; and as for Biddy, the spirit of emulation became so powerful in her bosom, that if anything, she actually outshrieked her mistress. Hearing this, the widow made a second effort, and fairly recovered the ground some might have fancied she had lost.

"Oh! Captain Spike," exclaimed the agi-

tated widow, "do not—do not, if you love me, do let them fire again!"

"How am I to help it!" asked the captain, a good deal to the point, though he overlooked the essential fact that, by heaving to, and waiting for the steamer's boat to board him, he might have prevented a second shot as completely as if he had the ordering of the whole affair. No second shot was fired, however. As it afterward appeared, the screams of Mrs. Budd and Biddy were heard on board the steamer, the captain of which naturally enough, supposing that the slaughter must be terrible where such cries had arisen, was satisfied with the mischief he had already done, and directed his people to secure their gun and go to the capstan-bars, in order to help to lift the anchor. In a word, the revenue vessel was getting under way, man-of-war fashion, which means somewhat expeditiously.

Spike understood the sounds that reached him, among which was the call of the boatswain, and he bestirred himself accordingly. Experienced as he was in chases and all sorts of nautical artifices, he very well knew that his

situation was sufficiently critical. It would have been so, with a steamer at his heels, in the open ocean; but, situated as he was, he was compelled to steer but one course, and to accept the wind on that course as it might offer. If he varied at all in his direction, it was only in a trifling way, though he did make some of these variations. Every moment was now precious, however, and he endeavoured to improve the time to the utmost. He knew that he could greatly outsail the revenue vessel under canvas, and some time would be necessary to enable her to get up her steam,—half an hour at the very least. On that half hour, then, depended the fate of the Molly Swash.

"Send the booms on the yards, and set stun'sails at once, Mr. Mulford," said Spike, the instant the more regular canvas was spread forward. "This wind will be free enough for all but the lower stun'sail, and we must drive the brig on."

"Are we not looking up too high, Captain Spike? The Stepping Stones are ahead of us, sir."

"I know that very well, Mulford; but it's

nearly high water, and the brig 's in light trim, and we may rub and go. By making a short cut here, we shall gain a full mile on the steamer; that mile may save us."

"Do you really think it possible to get away from that craft, which can always make a fair wind of it, in these narrow waters, Captain Spike?"

"One don't know, sir. Nothin' is done without tryin', and by tryin' more is often done than was hoped for. I have a scheme in my head, and Providence may favour me in bringing it about."

"Providence!" Spike had his Providence as well as a priest, and we dare say he often counted on its succour, with quite as rational grounds of dependence as many of the pharisees who are constantly exclaiming, "The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are these."

Sail was made on board the Swash with great rapidity, and the brig made a bold push at the Stepping Stones. Spike was a capital pilot. He insisted if he could once gain sight of the spar that was moored on those rocks for

a buoy, he should run with great confidence. The two lights were of great assistance, of course, but the revenue vessel could see these lights as well as the brig, and *she*, doubtless, had an excellent pilot on board. By the time the studding-sails were set on board the Swash, the steamer was aweigh, and her long line of peculiar sails became visible. Unfortunately for men who were in a hurry, she lay so much within the bluff as to get the wind scant, and her commander thought it necessary to make a stretch over to the southern shore, before he attempted to lay his course. When he was ready to tack, an operation of some time with a vessel of her great length, the Swash was barely in the obscurity, gliding off upon a slack bowline, at a rate which nothing but the damp night air, the ballast-trim of the vessel, united to her excellent sailing qualities, could have produced with so slight a breeze.

The first half hour took the Swash completely out of sight of the steamer. In that time, in truth, by actual superiority in sailing, by her greater state of preparation, and by the distance saved by a bold navigation, she had

gained fully a league on her pursuer. But, while the steamer had lost sight of the Swash, the latter kept the former in view, and that by means of a signal that was very portentous. She saw the light of the steamer's chimneys, and could form some opinion of her distance and position.

It was about eleven o'clock when the Swash passed the light at Sands' Point, close in with the land. The wind stood much as it had been. If there was a change at all, it was half a point more to the southward, and it was a little fresher. Such as it was, Spike saw he was getting, in that smooth water, quite eight knots out of his craft, and he made his calculations thereon. As yet, and possibly for half an hour longer, he was gaining, and might hope to continue to gain on the steamer. Then her turn would come. Though no great traveller, it was not to be expected that, favoured by smooth water and the breeze, her speed would be less than ten knots, while there was no hope of increasing his own without an increase of the wind. He might be five miles in advance, or six at the most; these six miles

would be overcome in three hours of steaming, to a dead certainty, and they might possibly be overcome much sooner. It was obviously necessary to resort to some other experiment than that of dead sailing, if an escape was to be effected.

The Sound was now several miles in width, and Spike, at first, proposed to his mate, to keep off dead before the wind, and by crossing over to the north shore, let the steamer pass ahead, and continue a bootless chase to the eastward. Several vessels, however, were visible in the middle of the passage, at distances varying from one to three miles, and Mulford pointed out the hopelessness of attempting to cross the sheet of open water, and expect to go unseen by the watchful eyes of the revenue people.

"What you say is true enough, Mr. Mulford," anwered Spike, after a moment of profound reflection, "and every foot that they come nearer, the less will be our chance. But here is Hempstead Harbour a few leagues ahead; if we can reach *that* before the blackguards close we may do well enough. It is a

deep bay, and was high land to darken the view, I don't think the brig could be seen at midnight by anything outside, if she was once fairly up that water a mile or two."

"That is our chance, sir!" exclaimed Mulford, cheerfully. "Ay, ay, I know the spot, and everything is favourable—try that, Captain Spike; I'll answer for it that we go clear."

Spike did try it. For a considerable time longer he stood on, keeping as close to the land as he thought it safe to run, and carrying everything that would draw. But the steamer was on his heels, evidently gaining fast. Her chimneys gave out flames, and there was every sign that her people were in earnest. To those on board the Swash, these flames seemed to draw nearer each instant, as indeed was the fact, and just as the breeze came fresher out of the opening in the hills, or the low mountains, which surround the place of refuge in which they designed to enter, Mulford announced that by the aid of the night-glass he could distinguish both sails and hull of their pursuer. Spike took a look, and throwing down the instrument, in a way to endanger it, he ordered

the studding-sails taken in. The men went aloft like cats, and worked as if they could could stand in air. In a minute or two the Swash was under what Mrs. Budd might have called her "attacking" canvas, and was close by the wind, looking on a good leg well up the harbour. The brig seemed to be conscious of the emergency, and glided ahead at capital speed. In five minutes she had shut in the flaming chimneys of the steamer. In five minutes more Spike tacked, to keep under the western side of the harbour, and out of sight as long as possible, and because he thought the breeze drew down fresher where he was than more out in the bay.

All now depended on the single fact whether the brig had been seen from the steamer or not, before she hauled into the bay. If seen, she had probably been watched; if not seen, there were strong grounds for hoping that she might still escape. About a quarter of an hour after Spike hauled up, the burning chimneys came again into view. The brig was then half a league within the bay, with a fine dark background of hills to throw her into shadow.

Spike ordered everything taken in but the try-sail, under which the brig was left to set slowly over towards the western side of the harbour. He now rubbed his hands with delight, and pointed out to Mulford the circumstance that the steamer kept on her course directly athwart the harbour's mouth! Had she seen the Swash, no doubt she would have turned into the bay also. Nevertheless an anxious ten minutes succeeded, during which the revenue vessel steamed fairly past, and shut in her flaming chimneys again by the eastern headlands of the estuary.

CHAPTER III.

" The western wave was all a flame,
The day was well-nigh done,
Almost upon the western wave
Rested the broad bright sun:
When that strange ship drove suddenly
Betwixt us and the sun."

The Ancient Mariner.

At that hour on the succeeding morning, when the light of day is just beginning to chase away the shadows of night, the Molly Swash became visible within the gloom of the high land which surrounds so much of the Bay of Hempstead, under easy sail, backing and filling, in order to keep within her hiding place, until a look could be had at the state of things without. Half an hour later she was so near the entrance of the estuary as to enable the look-outs aloft to ascertain that the coast was clear, when Spike ordered the helm to be put up, and the brig to be kept away to her course. At this precise moment, Rose ap-

peared on deck, refreshed by the sleep of a quiet night, and with cheeks tinged with a colour even more delicate than that which was now glowing in the eastern sky, and which was almost as brilliant.

"We stopped in this bit of a harbour for the night, Miss Rose, that is all," said Spike, observing that his fair passenger was looking about her, in some little surprise, at finding the vessel so near the land, and seemingly so much out of her proper position. "Yes; we always do that when we first start on a voyage, and before the brig gets used to travelling. Don't we, Mr. Mulford?"

Mr. Mulford, who knew how hopeless was the attempt to mystify Rose, as one might mystify her credulous and weak-minded aunt, and who had no disposition to deal any way but fairly by the beautiful, and in one sense now helpless, young creature before him, did not think fit to make any reply. To offend Spike he did not dare, more especially under present circumstances, and mislead Rose he would not. He affected not to hear the question, therefore, but issuing an order about the

head-sails, he walked forward as if to see it executed. Rose, herself, was not under as much restraint as the young mate.

"It is convenient, Captain Spike," she coolly answered for Mulford, "to have stopping places for vessels that are wearied; and I remember the time when my uncle used to tell me of such matters, very much in the same vein, but it was before I was twelve years old."

Spike hemmed, and he looked a little foolish; but, Clench, the boatswain, coming aft to say something to him in confidence, just at that moment, he was enabled to avoid the awkwardness of attempting to explain. This man, Clench, or Clinch, as the name was pronounced, was deep in the Captain's secrets, far more so than was his mate, and would have been filling Mulford's station at that very time, had he not been hopelessly ignorant of navigation. On the present occasion, his business was to point out to the Captain two or three lines of smoke that were visible above the waters of the Sound in the eastern board, one of which he was apprehensive

might turn out to be the smoke of the revenue craft from which they had so recently escaped.

"Steamers are curiosities in Long Island Sound, Clench," observed the Captain, levelling his glass where the smoke looked most suspicious;—"that must be a Providence or Stonington chap, coming west, with the Boston trains."

"Either of *them* would have been farther on by this time, Captain Spike," returned the doubting, but watchful boatswain. "It's a large smoke, and I fear it is the revenue fellow coming back, after having had a look well to the eastward, and satisfying himself that we are not to be had in that quarter."

Spike growled out his assent to the probability of such a conjecture, and promised vigilance. This satisfied his subordinate for the moment, and he walked forward, or to the place where he belonged. In the meantime, the widow came on deck, smiling and snuffing the salt air, and ready to be delighted with anything that was maritime.

"Good morning, Captain Spike," she cried,

"are we in the offing yet? You know I desired to be told when we are in the offing, for I intend to write a letter to my poor Mr. Budd's sister, Mrs. Sprague, as soon as we get to the offing."

"What is the offing, aunt?" inquired the handsome niece.

"Why, you have hardly been at sea long enough to understand me, child, should I attempt to explain. The offing, however, is the place where the last letters are always written to the owners and to friends ashore. The term comes, I suppose, from the circumstance that the vessel is about to be off, and it is natural to think of those we leave behind at such moment. I intend to write to your aunt Sprague, my dear, the instant I hear we are in the offing, and, what is more, I intend to make *you* my amanuensis."

"But how is the letter to be sent, aunty? I have no more objection to writing than any one else, but I do not see how the letter is to be sent. Really the sea *is* a curious region, with its stopping places for the night, and its offings to write letters at!"

"Yes, it is all as you say, Rose, a most remarkable region is the sea! You will admire it, as I admire it, when you come to know it better; and as your poor uncle admired it, and as Captain Spike admires it too. As for the letters, they can be sent ashore by the pilot, as letters are always sent."

"But, aunty, there *is* no pilot in the Swash, for Captain Spike refused to take one on board."

"Rose!—you don't understand what you are talking about. No vessel ever yet sailed without a pilot, if, indeed, any *can*. It's opposed to the law not to have a pilot; and now I remember to have heard your dear uncle say, it was not a voyage if a vessel didn't take away a pilot."

"But if they take them away, aunty, how can they send their letters ashore by them?"

"Poh! poh! child; you don't know what you're saying; but you'll overlook it, I hope, Captain Spike, for Rose is quick, and will soon learn to know better. As if letters could not be sent ashore by the pilot, though he was a hundred thousand miles from home! But,

Captain Spike, you must let me know when we are about to get off the Sound, for I know that the pilot is always sent ashore with his letters before the vessel gets off the Sound."

"Yes, yes," returned the Captain, a little mystified by the widow, though he knew her so well, and understood her so well. "You shall know, ma'am, when we get off soundings, for I suppose that is what you mean."

"What is the difference? Off the Sound, or off the soundings, of course must mean the same thing. But, Rosy, we will go below and write our letters at once, for I see a light-house yonder, and light-houses are always put just off the soundings."

Rose, who always suspected her aunt's nautical talk, though she did not know how to correct it, was not sorry to put an end to it now by going below and spreading her own writing materials, in readiness to write, as the other dictated. Biddy Noon was present, sewing on some of her own finery.

"Now, write as I tell you, Rose," commenced the widow.

"My dear sister Sprague.—Here we are at

last, just off the soundings, and light-houses all around us, and so many capes and islands in sight, that it does seem as if the vessel never *could* find its way through them all. Some of these islands must be the West Indies—

"Aunty, that can *never* be!" exclaimed Rose. "We left New York only yesterday."

"What of that? Had it been old times I grant you, several days might be necessary to get a sight of the West Indies; but, now when a letter can be written to a friend in Boston, and an answer received in half an hour, it requires no such time to go to the West Indies. Besides, what other islands are there in this part of the world? They can't be England."

"No, no," said Rose, at once seeing that it would be preferable to admit they were the West Indies. So the letter went on.

"Some of these islands must be the West Indies, and it is high time we saw some of them, for we are nearly off the Sound, and the light-houses are getting to be quite numerous. I think we have already past four since we left the wharf. But, my dear sister

Sprague, you will be delighted to hear how much better Rose's health is already becoming."

"My health, aunty! why, I never knew an ill day in my life!"

"Don't tell me that, my darling; I know too well what all these deceptive appearances of health amount to. I would not alarm you for the world, Rosy dear, but a careful parent —and I am your parent in affection, if not by nature—but a careful parent's eye is not to be deceived. I know you *look* well, but you are ill, my child, though, Heaven be praised, the sea air and hydropathy are already doing you a monstrous deal of good."

As Mrs. Budd concluded, she wiped her eyes, and appeared really glad that her niece had a less consumptive look than when she embarked. Rose sat, gazing at her aunt in mute astonishment. She knew how much and how truly she was beloved, and that induced her to be more tolerant of her connexion's foibles than even duty demanded. Feeling was blended with her respect, but it was almost too much for her, to hear that this long, and, in some respects, painful voyage, was undertaken

on her account, and without the smallest necessity for it. The vexation, however, would have been largely increased but for certain free communications that had occasionally occurred between her and the handsome mate, since the moment of her coming on board the brig. Rose knew that Harry Mulford loved her, too, for he had told her as much with a seaman's frankness; and though she had never let him know that his partiality was returned, her woman's heart was fast inclining towards him, with all her sex's tenderness. This made the mistake of her aunt's *tolerable*, though Rose was exceedingly vexed it should ever have occurred.

"Why, my dearest aunt," she cried, "they told me it was on *your* account that the voyage was undertaken."

"I know they did, poor dear Rosy, and that was in order not to alarm you. Some persons of delicate constitutions—"

"But my constitution is not in the least delicate, aunt; on the contrary, it is as good as possible; a blessing for which, I trust, I am truly grateful. I did not know but that *you*

might be suffering, though you do look so well, for they all agreed in telling me you had need of a sea voyage."

"I a subject for hydropathy! Why, child, water is no more necessary to me than it is to a cat!"

"But going to sea, aunty, is not hydropathy—"

"Don't say that, Rosy; do not say that, my dear. It *is* hydropathy, though on a large scale, as Captain Spike says, and when he gets into blue water, he promises that you shall have all the benefit of the treatment."

Rose was silent and thoughtful; after which she spoke quickly, like one to whom an important thought had suddenly occurred.

"And Captain Spike, then, was consulted in my case?" she asked.

"He was, my dear, and you have every reason to be grateful to him. He was the first to discover the change in your appearance, and to suggest a sea voyage. 'Marine hydropathy,' he said, 'he was sure would set you up again,' for Captain Spike thinks your constitution good, at the bottom, though the

high colour you have proves too high a state of habitual excitement."

"Was Dr. Monson consulted at all, aunt?"

"Not at all. You know the doctors are all against hydropathy and mesmerism and the magnetic telegraph, and everything that is new or quick; so we thought it best not to consult *him*."

"And my aunt Sprague?"

"Yes, *she* was consulted after everything was settled, and when I knew her notions could not undo what had been already done. But she is a seaman's widow, as well as myself, and has a great notion of the virtue of sea air."

"Then it would seem that Dr. Spike was the principal adviser in my case!"

"I own that he was, Rosy dear. Captain Spike was brought up by your uncle, who has often told me what a thorough seaman he was. 'There 's Spike, now,' he said to me one day, 'he can almost make his brig talk,'—this very brig, too, your uncle meant, Rosy, and of course one of the best vessels in the world, to take hydropathy in."

"Yes, aunty," returned Rose, playing with her pen, while her air proved how little her mind was in her words. "Well, what shall I say next to my aunt Sprague?"

"Rose's health is already becoming *confirmed*," resumed the widow, who thought it best to encourage her niece by as strong terms as she could enploy, "and I shall extol hydropathy to the skies, as long as I live. As soon as we reach our port of destination, my dear sister Sprague, I shall write you a line to let you know it, by the magnetic telegraph."

"But there is no magnetic telegraph at sea, aunty," interrupted Rose, looking up from the paper with her clear serene, blue eyes, expressing even her surprise at this touch of the relict's ignorance.

"Don't tell me that, Rosy, child, when everybody says the sparks will fly round the whole earth, just as soon as they will fly from New York to Philadelphia."

"But they must have something to fly on, aunty, and the ocean will not sustain wires or posts."

"Well, there is no need of being so parti-

cular: if there is no telegraph, the letter must come by mail. You can *say* telegraph, here, and when your aunt gets the letter, the post-mark will tell her how it came. It looks better to talk about telegraphic communications, child."

Rose resumed her pen, and wrote at her aunt's dictation, as follows:—"by the magnetic telegraph, when I hope to be able to tell you that our dear Rose is well. As yet, we both enjoy the ocean exceedingly; but when we get off the Sound, into blue water, and have sent the pilot ashore, or discharged him, I ought to say, which puts me in mind of telling you that a cannon was discharged at us only last night, and that the ball whistled so near me, that I heard it as plain as ever you heard Rose's piano."

"Had I not better tell my aunt Sprague, what is to be done when the pilot is discharged?"

"No, tell her about the cannon that was discharged, first, and about the ball that I heard. I had almost forgot that adventure, which was a very remarkable one; was it not, Biddy?"

"Indeed, Missus, and it was! And Miss Rose might put in the letter how we both screamed at the cannon, and might have been heard as plainly, every bit of it, as the ball."

"Say nothing on the subject, Rose, or we shall never hear the last of it. So, darling, you may conclude in your own way, for I believe I have told your aunt all that comes to my mind."

Rose did as desired, finishing the epistle in a very few words, for rightly enough she had taken it into her head, there was no pilot to be discharged, and consequently that the letter would never be sent. Her short, but frequent conferences with Mulford were fast opening her eyes, not to say her heart, and she was beginning to see Captain Spike in his true character, which was that of a great scoundrel. It is true, that the mate had not long judged his commander so harshly, but had rather seen his beautiful brig and her rare qualities, in her owner and commander, than the man himself; but jealousy had quickened his observation of late, and Stephen Spike had lost ground sensibly with Harry Mulford, within the last week. Two or three times before, the young

man had thought of seeking another berth on account of certain distrusts of Spike's occupations, but he was poor, and so long as he remained in the Swash, Harry's opportunities of meeting Rose were greatly increased. This circumstance, indeed, was the secret of his still being in the "Molly," as Spike usually called his vessel, the last voyage having excited suspicions that were rather of a delicate nature. Then the young man really loved the brig, which, if she could not be literally made to talk, could be made to do almost everything else.

A vessel, and a small vessel, too, is rather contracted as to space, but those who wish to converse can contrive to speak together often, even in such narrow limits. Such had been the fact with Rose Budd and the handsome mate. Twenty times since they sailed, short as that time was, had Mulford contrived to get so near to Rose, as to talk with her unheard by others. It is true that he seldom contrived to do this so long as the captain was in sight, but Spike was often below, and opportunities were constantly occurring. It was in the

course of these frequent, but brief conversations, that Harry had made certain dark hints touching the character of his commander, and the known recklessness of his proceedings. Rose had taken the alarm, and fully comprehending her aunt's mental imbecility, her situation was already giving her great uneasiness. She had some undefined hopes from the revenue-steamer, though, strangely enough, as it appeared to her, her youngest and most approved suitor betrayed a strong desire to escape from that craft, at the very moment he was expressing his apprehensions on account of her presence in the brig. This contradiction arose from a certain *esprit de corps* which seldom fails, more or less, to identify the mariner with his ship.

But the writing was finished, and the letter sealed with wax, Mrs. Budd being quite as particular in that respect as Lord Nelson, when the females again repaired on deck. They found Spike and his mate sweeping the eastern part of the Sound with their glasses, with a view to look out for enemies; or, what to them, just then, was much the same thing,

government craft. In this occupation, Rose was a little vexed to see that Mulford was almost as much interested as Spike himself, the love of his vessel seemingly overcoming his love for her, if not his love of the right. She knew of no reason, however, why the captain should dread any other vessel, and felt sufficiently provoked to question him a little on the subject; if it were only to let him see, that the niece was not as completely his dupe as the aunt. She had not been on deck five minutes, therefore, and during which time several expressions had escaped the two sailors touching their apprehensions of vessels seen in the distance, ere she commenced her inquiries.

"And *why* should we fear meeting other vessels?" Rose plainly demanded, "here in Long Island Sound, too, and within the power of the laws of the country?"

"Fear!" exclaimed Spike, a little startled, and a good deal surprised at this straightforward question. "Fear, Miss Rose! you do not think we are *afraid*, though there are many reasons why we do not wish to be

spoken by certain craft that are hovering about. In the first place, you know it is war time. I suppose you know, Madam Budd, that America is at war with Mexico?"

"Certainly," answered the widow, with dignity—"and that is a sufficient reason, Rose, why one vessel should chase, and another should run. If you had heard your poor uncle relate, as I have done, all his chasings and runnings away in the war times, child, you would understand these things better. Why, I have heard your uncle say that, in some of his long voyages, he has run thousands and thousands of miles, with sails set on both sides, and all over his ship!"

"Yes, aunty, and so have I; but that was running before the wind, as he used to call it."

"I suppose, however, Miss Rose," put in Spike, who saw that the niece would soon get the better of the aunt, "I s'pose, Miss Rose, that you will acknowledge that America is at war with Mexico?"

"I am sorry to say that such is the fact, but I remember to have heard you say, yourself,

Captain Spike, when my aunt was induced to undertake this voyage, that you did not consider there was the smallest danger from any Mexican."

"Yes, you did, Captain Spike," added the aunt. "You did say there was no danger from Mexicans."

"Nor is there a bit, Madam Budd, if Miss Rose and your honoured self will only hear me. There is no *danger*, because the brig has the heels of anything Mexico can send to sea. She has sold her steamers, and as for anything else under her flag I would not care a straw."

"The steamer from which we ran last evening, and which actually fired off a cannon at us, was not Mexican but American," said Rose in a pointed manner, which put Spike to his trumps.

"Oh! that steamer!" he stammered, "that was a *race*—only a race, Miss Rose, and I wouldn't let her come near me for the world. I should never have heard the last of it in the insurance office and on 'Change, did I let *her* overhaul us. You see, Miss Rose,—you see, Madam Budd,"—for Spike found it most con-

venient to address his mystifying discourse to the aunt, in preference to addressing it to the niece,—"you see, Madam Budd, the master of that craft and I are old cronies,—sailed together when boys, and set great store by each other. We met only last evening, just a'ter I had left your own agreeable mansion, Madam Budd, and, says he, 'Spike, when do you sail?' —'To-morrow's flood, Jones,' says I. His name is Jones—Peter Jones, and as good a fellow as ever lived.—'Do you go by the Hook, or by Hell-gate?"'

"Hurl-gate, Captain Spike, if you please, or Whirl-gate, which some people think is the true sound; but the other way of saying it is awful!"

"Well, the captain, my old master, always called it Hell-gate, and I learned the trick from him."

"I know he did, and so do all sailors; but genteel people now-a-days say nothing but Hurl-gate or Whirl-gate."

Rose smiled at this, as did Mulford; but neither said anything; the subject having once before been so recently before them; as for

ourselves, we are still so old-fashioned as to say, and write, Hell-gate, and intend so to do, in spite of all the Yankees who have yet passed through it, or who ever shall pass through it,—and that is saying a great deal. We do not like changing names to suit their uneasy spirits.

"Call the place Hurl-gate, and go on with your story," said the widow complacently.

"Yes, Madam Budd. 'Do you go by the Hook, or by Whirl-gate?' said Jones.—'By Whirl-a-gig-gate,' says I.—'Well,' says he, 'I shall go through the gate myself in the course of the morning; we may meet somewhere to the eastward; and, if we do, I'll bet you a beaver,' says he, 'I shew you my starn.'—'Agreed,' says I, and we shook hands upon it. That's the whole history of our giving the steamer the slip last night, and of my not wishing to let her speak me."

"But you went into a bay, and let her go past you," said Rose, coolly enough as to manner, but with great point as to substance; "was not that a singular way of running a race?"

"It does seem so, Miss Rose; but it's all plain enough when understood. I found that steam was too much for sails, and I stood up into the bay to let them run past us, in hopes they never would find out the trick. I care as little for a hat as any man; but I do care a good deal about having it reported on 'Change that the Molly was beat, even by a steamer."

This ended the discourse for the moment, Clench again having something to tell his captain in private.

"How much of that explanation am I to believe, and how much disbelieve?" asked Rose, the instant she was alone with Harry. "If it be all invention, it was a ready and ingenious story."

"No part of it is true. He no more expected that the steamer would pass through Hell-gate than I expected it myself. There was no bet, or race, therefore; but it was our wish to avoid Uncle Sam's cruisers, that was all."

"And, why should *you* wish any such thing?"

"On my honour, I can give you no better

reason, so far as I am concerned, than the fact that, wishing to keep clear of her, I do not like to be overhauled. Nor can I tell you why Spike is so much in earnest in holding the revenue vessel at arm's length. I know he dislikes all such craft, as a matter of course; but I can see no particular reason for it just now. A more innocent cargo was never struck into a vessel's hold."

"What is it?"

"Flour; and no great matter of that. The brig is not half full, being just in beautiful ballast trim, as if ready for a race. I can see no sufficient reason beyond native antipathy why Captain Spike should wish to avoid any craft, for it is all humbug his dread of a Mexican; and, least of all, here in Long Island Sound. All that story about Jones is a tub for whales."

"Thank you for the allusion; my aunt and myself being the whales."

"You know I do mean—*can* mean nothing, Rose, that is disrespectful to either yourself or your aunt."

Rose looked up, and she looked pleased.

Then she mused in silence for some time, when she again spoke:—

"Why have you remained another voyage with such a man, Harry?" she asked earnestly.

"Because, as his first officer, I have had access to your house, when I could not have had it otherwise; and, because I have apprehended that he might persuade Mrs. Budd, as he had boasted to me it was his intention to do, to make this very voyage."

Rose now looked grateful; and deeply grateful did she feel, and had reason to feel. Harry had concealed no portion of his history from her. Like herself, he was a ship-master's child; but one better educated and better connected than was customary for the class. His father had paid a good deal of attention to the youth's early years; but had made a seaman of him, out of choice. His father had lost his all, however, with his life, in a shipwreck, and Harry was thrown upon his own resources, at the early age of twenty. He had made one or two voyages as a second mate, when chance threw him in Spike's way, who, pleased with some evidences of coolness and skill that he

had shewn in a foreign port, on the occasion of another loss, took him as his first officer; in which situation he had remained ever since, partly from choice, and partly from necessity. On the other hand, Rose had a fortune, by no means a large one; but several thousands in possession from her own father, and as many more in reversion from her uncle. It was this money, taken in connexion with the credulous imbecility of the aunt, that had awakened the cupidity and excited the hopes of Spike. After a life of lawless adventures, one that had been chequered by every shade of luck, he found himself growing old, with his brig growing old with him, and little left besides his vessel and the sort of half cargo that was in her hold. Want of means, indeed, was the reason why the flour-barrels were not more numerous.

Rose heard Mulford's explanation favourably, as, indeed, she heard most of that which came from him, but did not renew the discourse, Spike's conference with the boatswain just then terminating.

The captain now came aft, and began to

speak of the performances of his vessel, in a way to shew that he took great pride in them.

"We are travelling at the rate of ten knots, Madam Budd," he said exultingly, "and that will take us clear of the land before night shuts in ag'in. Montauk is a good place for an offing; I ask for no better."

"Shall we, then, have *two* offings this voyage, Captain Spike?" asked Rose a little sarcastically; "if we are in the offing now, and are to be in the offing when we reach Montauk, there must be two such places."

"Rosy, dear, you amaze me!" put in the aunt. "There is no offing until the pilot is discharged; and when he is discharged there is nothing but offing—it's all offing. On the sound is the first great change that befalls a vessel as she goes to sea; then comes the offing; next the pilot is discharged—then—then—what comes next, Captain Spike?"

"Then the vessel takes her departure,—an old navigator like yourself, Madam Budd, ought not to forget the departure."

"Quite true, sir. The departure is a very important part of a seaman's life. Often and

often have I heard my poor dear Mr. Budd talk about his departures. His departures, and his offings, and his——"

"Landfalls," added Spike, perceiving that the ship-master's relict was a little at fault.

"Thank you, sir; the hint is quite welcome. His landfalls, also, were often in his mouth."

"What is a landfall, aunty?" inquired Rose; "it appears a strange term to be used by one who lives on the water."

"Oh! there is no end to the curiosities of sailors! A 'landfall,' my dear, means a shipwreck, of course. To fall on the land—and a very unpleasant fall it is, when a vessel should keep on the water. I've heard of dreadful landfalls in my day, in which hundreds of souls have been swept into eternity in an instant!"

"Yes; yes, Madam Budd. There *are* such accidents, truly, and serious things be they to encounter," answered Spike, hemming a little, to clear his throat, as was much his practice whenever the widow ran into any unusually extravagant blunder,—"yes, serious things to encounter. But the landfall that I mean is a

different sort of thing: being, as you well know, what we say when we come in *sight* of land·a'ter a v'y'ge; or meaning the land we may happen first to see. The departure is the beginning of our calculations, when we lose sight of the last cape or headland, and the landfall closes them, by letting us know where we are, at the other end of our journey, as you probably remember."

"Is there not such a thing as clearing out, in navigation?" asked Rose gravely, willing to cover a little confusion that was manifest in her aunt's manner.

"Not exactly in navigation, Miss Rose; but clearing out, with honest folk, ought to come first, and navigation a'terwards. Clearing out means going through the custom-house accordin' to law."

"And the Molly Swash has cleared out, I hope?"

"Sartain—a more lawful clearance was never given in Wall Street. It's for Key West and a market. I did think of making it Havanna and a market; but port charges are lightest at Key West."

"Then Key West is the place to which we are bound?"

"It ought to be, agreeable to papers; though vessels sometimes miss the ports for which they clear."

Rose put no more questions; and her aunt being conscious that she had not appeared to advantage in the affair of the "landfall," was also disposed to be silent. Spike and Mulford had their attention drawn to the vessel, and the conversation dropped.

The reader can readily suppose that the Molly Swash had not been standing still all this time. So far from this, she was running "down sound" with the wind on her quarter, or, at south-west, making great headway. As she was close under the south shore, or on the island side of the water she was in, the vessel had no other motion than that of her speed, and the females escaped everything like sea-sickness for the time being. This enabled them to attend to making certain arrangements necessary to their comforts below, previously to getting into rough water. In acquitting herself of this task, Rose received much useful

advice from Josh, the steward, though his new assistant, Jack Tier, turned out to be a prize indeed in the cabin. The first was only a steward; but the last proved himself not only a handy person of his calling, but one full of resources,—a genius in his way. Josh soon became so sensible of his own inferiority in contributing to the comforts of females, tha the yielded the entire management of the "ladies' cabin," as a little place that might have been ten feet square was called, to his uncouth-looking, but really expert deputy. Jack waddled about below as if born and brought up in such a place, and seemed every way fitted for his office. In height, and in build generally, there was a surprising conformity between the widow and the steward's deputy,—a circumstance which might induce some to think they must often have been in each other's way in a space so small; though, in point of fact, Jack never ran foul of any one. He seemed to avoid this inconvenience, by a species of nautical instinct.

Towards the turn of the day Rose had everything arranged, and was surprised to find how

much room she had made for her aunt and herself, by means of Jack's hints, and how much more comfortable it was possible to be in that small cabin than she had at first supposed.

After dinner, Spike took his *siesta*. He slept in a little state-room, that stood on the starboard side of the quarter-deck, quite aft; as Mulford did in one on the larboard. These two state-rooms were fixtures; but a light deck overhead, which connected them, shipped and unshipped, forming a shelter for the man at the wheel when in its place, as well as for the officer of the watch, should the last see fit to use it, in bad weather. This sort of a cuddy Spike termed his "coach-house."

The captain had no sooner gone into the state-room, and closed its window, movements that were understood by Mulford, than the latter took occasion to intimate to Rose, by means of Jack Tier, the state of things on deck; when the young man was favoured with the young lady's company.

"He has turned in for his afternoon's nap, and will sleep for just one hour, blow high, or blow low," said the mate, placing himself at

Rose's side on the trunk, which formed the usual seat for those who could presume to take the liberty of sitting down at all on the quarter-deck. "It's a habit with him, and we can count on it with perfect security."

"His doing so now is a sign that he has no immediate fears of the revenue-steamer?"

"The coast is quite clear of her. We have taken good looks at every smoke; but can see nothing that appears like our late companion. She has, doubtless, gone to the eastward on duty, and merely chased us as a bit of by-play on her road."

"But, *why* should she chase us at all?"

"Because we ran. Let a dog run, or a man run, or a cat run, ten to one but something starts in chase. It is human nature, I believe, to give chase, though I will admit there was something suspicious about that steamer's momements,—her anchoring off the fort, for instance. But, let her go for the present. Are you getting things right, and to your mind, below decks?"

"Very much so. The cabin is small, and the two state-rooms the merest drawers that

ever were used; but, by putting everything in its place we have made sufficient room, and no doubt shall be quite comfortable."

"I am sorry you did not call on me for assistance. The mate has a prescriptive right to help to stow away."

"We did without your services," returned Rose, slightly blushing. "Jack Tier, as he is called—Josh's assistant—is a very useful person, and has been our adviser and manager. I want no better for such services."

"He *is* a queer fellow, all round. Take him altogether, I hardly ever saw so droll a being; as thick as he is long, with a waddle like a duck, a voice that is cracked, hair like bristle, and knee high; the man might make a fortune as a show. Tom Thumb is scarcely a greater curiosity."

"He is singular in 'build,' as you call it," returned Rose, laughing; "but, I can assure you that he is a most excellent fellow in his way—worth a dozen of Josh. Do you know, Harry, that I suspect he has strong feelings towards Captain Spike—though, whether of like or dislike, friendship or enmity, I am at a loss to say."

"And, why do you think that he has any feeling at all? I have heard Spike say he left the fellow ashore somewhere down on the Spanish Main, or in the islands, quite twenty years since; but a sailor would scarce carry a grudge so long a time for such a thing as that."

"I do not know; but feeling there is, and much of it too; though, whether hostile or friendly, I will not undertake to say."

"I'll look to the chap now you tell me this. It is a little odd the manner in which he got on board us, taken in connexion with the company he was in; and a discovery might be made. Here he is, however; and, as I keep the keys of the magazine, he can do us no great harm, unless he scuttles the brig."

"Magazine! Is there such a thing here?"

"To be sure there is; and ammunition enough in it to keep eight carronades in lively conversation for a couple of hours."

"A carronade is what you call a gun, is it not?"

"A piece of a one;—being somewhat short, like your friend, Jack Tier, who is shaped a good deal like a carronade."

Rose smiled—nay, half laughed; for Harry's pleasantries almost took the character of wit in her eyes; but she did not the less pursue her inquiries.

"Guns! and where are they, if they be on this vessel?"

"Do not use such a lubberly expression, my dear Rose, if you respect your father's profession. *On* a vessel is a new-fangled Americanism, that it is neither fish, flesh, nor red-herring, as we sailors say—neither English nor Greek."

"What should I say, then? My wish is not to parade sea-talk, but to use it correctly when I use it at all."

"The expression is hardly 'sea-talk,' as you call it; but every day English—that is, when rightly used. *On* a vessel is no more English than it is nautical; no sailor ever used such an expression."

"Tell me what I ought to say, and you will find me a willing, if not an apt scholar. I am certain I have often *read* it in the newspapers, and that quite lately."

"I'll answer for that; and it's another proof—

of its being wrong. *In* a vessel is as correct as in a coach, and *on* a vessel as wrong as can be; but you can say *on board* a vessel, though not on a vessel! Not on the boards of a vessel, as Mrs. Budd has it."

"Mr. Mulford!"

"I beg a thousand pardons, Rose, and will offend no more; though she does make some very queer mistakes."

"My aunt thinks it an honour to my uncle's memory to be able to use the language of his professional life; and if she do sometimes make mistakes that are absurd, it is with a motive so respectable that no sailor should deride them."

"I am rebuked for ever. Mrs. Budd may call the anchor a silver spoon, hereafter, without my ever smiling. But, if the aunt has this kind remembrance of a seaman's life, why cannot the niece think equally well of it?"

"Perhaps she does," returned Rose, smiling again—"seeing all its attractions through the claims of Captain Spike."

"I think half the danger from him gone, now that you seem so much on your guard.

What an odious piece of deception, to persuade Mrs. Budd that you were fast falling into a decline!"

"One so odious that I shall surely quit the brig at the first port we enter; or, even in the first suitable vessel that we may speak."

"And Mrs. Budd—could you persuade her to such a course?"

"You scarce know us, Harry Mulford. My aunt commands when there is no serious duty to perform; but we change places when there is. I can persuade her to anything that is right in ten minutes."

"You might persuade a world!" cried Harry, with strong admiration expressed in his countenance, after which he began to converse with Rose on a subject so interesting to themselves, that we do not think it prudent to relate any more of the discourse, forgetting all about the guns.

About four o'clock of a fine summer's afternoon, the Swash went through the Race, on the best of the ebb, and with a staggering south-west wind. Her movement past the land, just at that point, could not have been less than

at the rate of fifteen miles in the hour. Spike was in high spirits, for his brig had got on famously that day, and there was nothing in sight to the eastward. He made no doubt, as he had told his mate, that the steamer had gone into the Vineyard Sound, and that she was bound over the shoals.

"They want to make 'political capital' out of her," he added, using one of the slang phrases that the "business habits" of the American people are so fast and so rapidly incorporating into the common language of this country. "They want to make political capital out of her, Harry, and must show her off to the Boston folk, who are full of notions. Well, let them turn her to as much account, that way, as they please, so long as they keep her clear of the Molly. Your sarvant, Madam Budd," addressing the widow, who just at that moment came on deck; "a fine a'ternoon, and likely to be a clear night to run off the coast in."

"Clear nights are desirable, and most of all at sea, Captain Spike," returned the relict, in her best complacent manner, "whether it be to

run *off* a coast, or to run *on* a coast. In either case a clear night, or a bright moon, must be highly useful."

Captain Spike rolled his tobacco over in his mouth, and cast a furtive glance at the mate; but he did not presume to hazard any further manifestations of his disposition to laugh.

"Yes, Madam Budd," he answered, "it is quite as you say, and I am only surprised where you have picked up so much of what I call useful, practical knowledge."

"We live and learn, sir. You will recollect that this is not my first voyage, having made one before, and that I passed a happy, happy, thirty years in the society of my poor, dear husband, Rose's uncle, and the best of men! One must have been dull, indeed, not to have picked up from such a companion, much of a calling that was so dear to him. He actually gave me lessons in the 'sea dialect' as he called it; which probably is the true reason I am so accurate and general in my acquisitions."

"Yes, Madam Budd, yes,—hem—you are—yes, you are wonderful in that way. We shall

soon get an offing, now, Madam Budd—yes, soon get an offing, now."

"And take in our departure, Captain Spike," added the widow, with a very intelligent smile.

"Yes, take our departure. Montauk is yonder, just coming in sight; only some three hours' run from this spot. When we get there, the open sea will be before us, and give me the open sea, and I'll not call the King my uncle."

"Was he your uncle, Captain Spike?"

"Only in a philanthropic way, Madam Budd. Yes, let us get a good offing, and a rapping to'gallant breeze, and I do not think I should care much for *two* of Uncle Sam's new fashioned revenue-craft; one on each side of me."

"How delightful do I find such conversation, Rose! It's as much like your poor, dear uncle's, as one pea is like another. Yes, *he* used to say, too 'Let me only have one on each side of me, and a wrapper round the top-gallant sail, to hold the breeze, and I'd not call the King my uncle.' Now I think of it, *he* used to talk about the King as his uncle too."

"It was all talk, aunty. He had no uncle, and what is more, he had no king."

"That's quite true, Miss Rose," rejoined Spike, attempting to bow, which ended in a sort of jerk. "It *is* not very becoming in us republicans to be talking of kings, but a habit is a habit. Our forefathers had kings, and we drop into their ways, without thinking of what we are doing. Fore-top-gallant yard there!"

"Sir."

"Keep a bright look-out ahead. Let me know the instant you make anything in the neighbourhood of Montauk."

"Ay, ay, sir."

"As I was saying, Madam Budd, we seamen drop into our forefathers' ways. Now, when I was a youngster, I remember, one day, that we fell in with a ketch—you know, Miss Rose, what a ketch is, I suppose?"

"I have not the least notion of it, sir."

"Rosy, you amaze me," exclaimed the aunt; "and you a ship-master's niece, and a ship-master's daughter! A catch is a trick that sailors have when they quiz landsmen."

"Yes, Madam Budd, yes; we have *them*

sort of catches, too; but I now mean the vessel with a peculiar rig, which we call a ketch, you know."

"Is it the full jigger, or the half jigger sort, that you mean?"

Spike could hardly stand this, and he had to hail the top-gallant-yard again, in order to keep the command of his muscles; for, he saw by the pretty frown that was gathering on the brow of Rose, that she was regarding the matter a little seriously. Luckily, the answer of the man on the yard diverted the mind of the widow from the subject, and prevented the necessity of any reply.

"There's a light, of course, sir, on Montauk, is there not, Captain Spike?" demanded the seaman who was aloft.

"To be sure there is—every head-land, hereabouts, has its light; and some have two."

"Ay, ay, sir—it's *that* which puzzles me; I think I see one light-house, and I'm not sartain but I see two."

"If there is anything like a second, it must be a sail. Montauk has but one light."

Mulford sprang into the fore-rigging, and,

in a minute, was on the yard. He soon came down, and reported the light-house in sight, with the afternoon's sun shining on its summit, but no sail near.

"My poor dear Mr. Budd used to tell a story of his being cast away on a light-house in the East Indies," put in the relict, as soon as the mate had ended his report, "which always deeply affected me. It seems there were three ships of them together, in an awful tempest, directly off the land."

"That was comfortable, any how," cried Spike; "if it must blow hard, let it come off the land, say I."

"Yes, sir, it was directly off the land, as my poor husband always said, which made it so much the worse you must know, Rosy, though Captain Spike's gallant spirit would rather encounter danger than not. It blew what they call a Hyson in the Chinese seas."

"A what, aunty? Hyson is the name of a tea, you know."

"A Hyson, I'm pretty sure it was; and I suppose the wind is named after the tea, or the tea after the wind."

"The ladies do get in a gale, sometimes, over their tea," said Spike, gallantly; "but I rather think Madam Budd must mean a Typhoon."

"That's it,—a Typhoon, or a Hyson,—there is not much difference between them, you see. Well, it blew a Typhoon, and *they* are always mortal to somebody. This my poor Mr. Budd well knew, and he had got his chronometer out for that Typhoon."

"Excuse me, aunty, it was the barometer that he was watching,—the chronometer was his watch."

"So it was,—his watch on deck *was* his chronometer. I declare I am forgetting a part of my education. Do you know the use of a chronometer, now, Rose? You have seen your uncle's often, but do you know how he used it?"

"Not in the least, aunty. My uncle often tried to explain it, but I never could understand him."

"It must have been, then, because Captain Budd did not try to make himself comprehended," said Mulford; "for I feel certain

nothing could be easier than to make *you* understand the uses of the chronometer."

"I should like to learn them exceedingly from you, Mr. Mulford," answered the charming girl, with an emphasis so slight on the "you," that no one observed it but the mate, but which was clear enough to him, and caused every nerve to thrill.

"I can attempt the office of instructor," answered the young man, "if it be agreeable to Mrs. Budd, who would probably like to hear it herself."

"Certainly, Mr. Mulford; though I fancy you can say little on *such* a subject that I have not often heard already from my poor dear Mr. Budd."

This was not very encouraging, truly, but Rose continuing to look interested, the mate proceeded.

"The use of the chronometer is to ascertain the longitude," said Harry; "and the manner of doing it is simply this: a chronometer is nothing more or less than a watch, made with more care than usual, so as to keep the most accurate time. They are of all sizes, from that

of a clock down to this which I wear in my fob, and which is a mere watch in size and appearance. Now, the nautical almanacs are all culculated to some particular meridian."

"Yes," interrupted the relict, "Mr. Budd had a great deal to say about maridians."

"That of London, or Greenwich, being the meridian used by those who use the English almanacs, and those of Paris, or St. Petersburg, by the French and Russians. Each of those places has an observatory, and chronometers that are kept carefully regulated the year round. Every chronometer is set by the regulator of the particular observatory, or place, to which the almanac used is calculated."

"How wonderfully like my poor, dear Mr. Budd, all this is, Rosy! Maridians, and calculated, and almanacs! I could almost think I heard your uncle entertaining me with one of his nautical discussions, I declare."

"Now the sun rises earlier in places east, than in places west of us."

"It rises earlier in the summer but later in the winter, everywhere, Mr. Mulford."

"Yes, my dear madam, but the sun rises

earlier every day in London than it does in New York."

"That is impossible," said the widow dogmatically. "Why should not the sun rise at the same time in England and in America?"

"Because England is east of America, aunty. The sun does not move, you know, but only *appears* to us to move, because the earth turns round, from west to east, which causes those who are farthest east to see it the first. That is what Mr. Mulford means."

"Rose has explained it perfectly well," continued the mate, "how the earth is divided into three hundred and sixty degrees, and the day is divided into twenty-four hours. If three hundred and sixty be divided by twenty-four, the quotient will be fifteen. It follows, that for each fifteen degrees of longitude there is a difference of just one hour in the rising of the sun all over the earth, where it rises at all. New York is near five times fifteen degrees west of Greenwich, and the sun consequently rises five hours later at New York, than at London."

"There *must* be a mistake in this, Rosy,"

said the relict, in a tone of desperate resignation, in which the desire to break out in dissent was struggling oddly enough with an assumed dignity of deportment. "I have always heard that the people of London are some of the latest in the world. Then, I've been in London, and know that the sun rises in New York in December a good deal earlier than it does in London,—I know *that* by the clock—yes, by the clock."

"True enough, by the clock, Mrs. Budd; for London is more than ten degrees north of New York, and the farther north you go, the later the sun rises in winter, and the earlier in summer."

The relict merely shrugged her shoulders, as much as to say that she knew no such thing; but Rose, who had been well taught, raised her serene eyes to her aunt's face and mildly said—

"All rue, aunty; and that is owing to the fact that the earth is smaller at each end than in the middle.

Fiddle faddle with your smaller and larger ends, Rose—I have been in London, dear, and

know that the sun rises later there than in New York; that is, in the month of December, at the time I was there, and that I know by the clock, I tell you."

"The reason of which is," resumed Mulford, "because the clocks of each place keep the time of that place. Now, it is different with the chronometers. They are set in the observatory of Greenwich, and keep the time of Greenwich. This watch chronometer was set there, only six months since, and its time, as you see, is near nine o'clock, when in truth it is only about four o'clock here, where we are."

"I wonder you keep such a watch, Mr. Mulford!"

"I keep it," returned the mate, smiling, "because I know it to keep good time. It has the Greenwich time; and, as your watch has the New York time, by comparing them together, it is quite easy to find the longitude of New York."

"Do you then keep watches to compare with your chronometers?" asked Rose, with

"Certainly not, as that would require a watch for every separate part of the ocean, and then we should only get known longitudes. It would be impracticable, and load a ship with nothing but watches. What we do is this: we set our chronometers at Greenwich, and thus keep the Greenwich true time wherever we go. The greatest attention is paid to the chronometers, to see that they receive no injuries; and usually there are two, and often more of them, to compare one with another, in order to see that they go well. When in the middle of the ocean, for instance, we find the true time of day at that spot, by ascertaining the height of the sun. This we do by means of our quadrants, or sextants; for, as the sun is always in the zenith at twelve o'clock, nothing is easier than to do this, when the sun can be seen, and an arc of the heavens measured. At the instant the height of the sun is ascertained by one observer, he calls to another, who notes the time on the chronometer. The difference in these two times, or that of the chronometer and that of the sun, gives the distance in degrees

and minutes between the longitude of Greenwich and that of the place on the ocean where the observer is, and that gives him his longitude. If the difference is three hours and twenty minutes, in time, the distance from Greenwich is fifty degrees of longitude, because the sun rises those three hours and twenty minutes sooner in London than in the fiftieth degree of west longitude."

"A watch is a watch, Rosy," put in the aunt doggedly—"and time is time. When it's four o'clock at our house, it's four o'clock at your Aunt Sprague's, and it's so all over the world. The world *may* turn round—I'll not deny it, for your uncle often said as much as *that*; but it cannot turn in the way Mr. Mulford says, or we should all fall off it, at night, when it was bottom upwards. No, sir, *no;* you have started wrong. My poor, dear, late Mr. Budd, always admitted that the world turned round, as the books say; but, when I suggested to him the difficulty of keeping things in their places, with the earth upside down, he acknowledged candidly, for he was all candour, I *must* say that for him—and

owned that he had made a discovery, by means of his barometer, which showed that the world did not turn round in the way you describe, or by rolling over, but by whirling about as one turns in a dance. You must remember your uncle's telling me this, Rosy?"

Rose did remember her uncle's telling her aunt this, as well as a great many other similar prodigies. Captain Budd had married his silly wife, on account of her pretty face, and when the novelty of that was over, he often amused himself by inventing all sorts of absurdities, to amuse both her and himself. Among other things, Rose well remembered his quieting her aunt's scruples about falling off the earth, by laying down the theory that the world did not "roll over" but "whirl round:" making it a sort of a whirl-gate. But Rose did not answer the question.

"Objects are kept in their places on the earth by means of attraction," Mulford ventured to say, with a great deal of humility of manner, "I believe it is thought there is no up, or down, except as we go from, or towards the earth; and that would make the position of the last a

matter of indifference, as respects objects keeping on it."

"Attractions are great advantages, I will own, sir, especially to our sex. I think it will be acknowledged there has been no want of them in our family, any more than there has been of sense and information. Sense and information, we pride ourselves on; attractions being gifts from God, we try to think less of them. But all the attractions in the world could not keep Rosy, here, from falling off the earth, did it ever come bottom upwards. And, mercy on me, where would she fall to!"

Mulford saw that argument was useless, and he confined his remarks, during the rest of the conversation, to shewing Rose the manner in which the longitude of a place might be ascertained, with the aid of the chronometer, and by means of observations to get the true time of day, at the particular place itself. Rose was so quick-witted, and already so well instructed, as easily to understand the principles; the details being matters of no great moment to one of her sex and habits. But Mrs. Budd remained antagonist to the last. She obsti-

nately maintained that twelve o'clock was twelve o'clock; or, if there *was* any difference, "London hours were notoriously later, than those of New York." Against such assertions arguments were obviously useless, and Mulford perceiving that Rose began to fidget, had sufficient tact to change the conversation altogether. And still the Molly Swash kept in swift motion. Montauk was, by this time, a-beam, and the little brigantine began to rise and fall, on the long swells of the Atlantic, which now opened before her, in one vast sheet of green and rolling waters. On her right, lay the termination of Long Island; a low, rocky cape, with its light, and a few fields in tillage, for the uses of those who tended it. It was the "land's end" of New York, while the island that was heaving up, out of the sea, at a distance of about twenty miles to the eastward, was the property of Rhode Island, being called Blok Island. Between the two, the Swash shaped her course for the ocean.

Spike had betrayed uneasiness, as his brig came up with Montauk; but the coast seemed clear, with not even a distant sail in sight, and

he came aft rubbing his hands with delight, speaking cheerfully.

"All right, Mr. Mulford," he cried, "everything ship-shape and Brister fashion. Not even a smack fishing here-away, which is a little remarkable. Ha! what are you staring at, over the quarter, there?"

"Look here, sir; directly in the wake of the setting-sun, which we are now opening from the land—is not that a sail?"

"Sail! Impossible, sir. What should a sail be doing in there, so near Montauk—no man ever saw a sail there, in his life. It is a spot in the sun, Madam Budd, that my mate has got a glimpse at, and, sailor-like, he mistakes it for a sail! Ha—ha—ha—yes, Harry, it's a spot in the sun.'

"It is a spot *on* the sun, sir, as you say, but it's a spot made by a vessel—and here is a boat pulling towards her, might-and-main, going from the light, as if carrying news."

It was no longer possible for Spike's hopes to deceive him. There was a vessel sure enough, though, when first seen, it was so directly in a line with the fiery orb of the

setting-sun, as to escape observation. As the brig went foaming on towards the ocean, however, the black speck was soon brought out of the range of the orb of day, and Spike's glass was instantly levelled at it.

"Just as one might expect, Mr. Mulford," cried the captain, lowering his glass, and looking aloft to see what could be done to help his craft along; "a revenue cutter, as I 'm a wicked sinner! There she lies, sir, within musket-shot of the shore, hid behind the point, as it might be, in waiting for us, with her head to the southward, her helm hard down, topsails aback, and foresail brailed: as wicked looking a thing as Free Trade and Sailors' Rights ever ran from! My life on it, sir, she 's been put in that precise spot, in waiting for the Molly to arrive. You see, as we stand on, it places her as handsomely to windward of us, as the heart of man could desire."

"It is a revenue cutter, sir; now she 's out of the sun's wake, that is plain enough. And that is her boat which has been sent to the right to keep a look-out for us. Well, sir,

she's to windward; but we have everything set for our course, and, as we are fairly a-beam, she must be a great traveller to overhaul us."

"I thought those cutters were all down in the Gulf," growled the captain, casting his eyes aloft again, to see that everything drew; "I'm sure the newspapers have mentioned as many as twenty that are down there; yet here is one, lying behind Montauk, like a snake in the grass!"

"At any rate, by the time he gets his boat up, we shall have the start of him—ay; there, he fills and falls off, to go and meet her. He'll soon be after us, Captain Spike, at racing speed."

Everything occurred as these two mariners had foreseen. The revenue cutter, one of the usual fore-top-sail schooners that are employed in that service, up and down the coast, had no sooner hoisted up her boat, than she made sail, a little off the wind, on a line to close with the Swash. As for the brig, she had hauled up to an easy tow-line, as she came round Montauk, and was now standing off S.S. East, still having the wind at S. West. The wea-

therly position of the cutter enabled her to steer rather more than one point freer. At the commencement of the chase, the vessels were about a mile and a half apart, a distance too great to enable the cutter to render the light guns she carried available, and it was obvious from the first that everything depended on speed. And speed it was, truly; both vessels fairly flying; the Molly Swash having at last met with something very like her match. Half an hour satisfied both Spike and Mulford that by giving the cutter the advantage of one point of a freer wind, she would certainly get alongside of them; and the alternative was to keep off.

"A starn chase is a long chase, all the world over," cried Spike. "Edge away, sir; edge away sir; and bring the cutter well on our quarter."

This order was obeyed, but to the surprise of those in the Swash, the cutter did not exactly follow, though she kept off a little more. Her object seemed to be to maintain her weatherly position, and in this manner the two vessels ran on for an hour longer, until the Swash had

made most of the distance between Montauk and Blok Island. Objects were now becoming dimly apparent on the last, and the light on the point was just becoming visible, a lone star above a waste of desert, the sun having been down now fully a quarter of an hour, and twilight beginning to draw the curtain of night over the water.

"A craft under Blok," shouted the look-out, that was still kept aloft as a necessary precaution.

"What sort of a craft?" demanded Spike fiercely, for the very mention of a sail at that moment aroused all his ire. "Ar'n't you making a frigate out of an apple orchard?"

"It's the steamer, sir. I can now see her smoke. She's just clearing the land, on the south side of the Island, and seems to be coming round to meet us."

A long, low, eloquent whistle from the captain succeeded this announcement. The man aloft was right. It *was* the steamer, sure enough; and she had been lying hid behind Blok Island, exactly as her consort had been placed behind Montauk, in waiting for their

chase to arrive. The result was to put the Molly Swash in exceeding jeopardy; and the reason why the cutter kept so well to windward was fully explained. To pass out to sea between these two craft was hopeless. There remained but a single alternative from capture, by one or by the other, and that Spike adopted instantly. He kept his brig dead away, setting studding sails on both sides. This change of course brought the cutter nearly aft, or somewhat on the other quarter, and laid the brig's head in a direction to carry her close to the northern coast of the Island. But the principal advantage he obtained over the steamer, was in her course, for the latter could not keep off without first standing a mile or two, or even more, to the westward, in order to clear the land. This was so much clear gain to the Swash, which was running off at racing speed, on a north-east course, while her most dangerous enemy was still heading to the westward. As for the cutter, she kept away; but it was soon apparent that the brig had the heels of her, dead before the wind.

Darkness soon began to close around the

three vessels, and the brig and the schooner were becoming visible to each other principally by means of their night glasses; though the steamer's position could be easily distinguished by means of her flaming chimney. This latter vessel stood to the westward for a quarter of an hour, when her commander appeared to become suddenly conscious of the ground he was losing, and he wore short round, and went off before the wind, under steam and canvas, intending to meet the chase off the north-eastern side of the island. The very person who had hailed the Swash as she was leaving the wharf, who had passed her in Hell-gate, with Jack Tier in his boat, and who had joined her off Throgmorton's, was now on her deck, urging her commander, by every consideration, not to let the brig escape. It was at his suggestion that the vessel went round. Nervous and eager to seize the brig, he prevailed on the commander of the steamer to change his course. Had he done no more than this, all might have been well; but, so exaggerated were his notions of the Swash's sailing, that, instead of suffering the steamer to keep along

the eastern side of the island, he showed her commander the necessity of standing off, a long distance to the northward and eastward, with a view to get ahead of the chase. This was not bad advice, were there any certainty that Spike would stand on, of which, however, he had no intention.

The night set in dark and cloudy, and the instant that Spike saw, by means of the flaming chimney, that the steamer had wore, and was going to the eastward of Blok, his plan was laid. Calling to Mulford, he communicated his project to him, and was glad to find that his intelligent mate was of his own way of thinking. The necessary orders were given accordingly, and everything was got ready for their execution.

In the meantime, the two revenue craft were much in earnest. The schooner was one of the fastest in the service, and had been placed under Montauk as described, in the confident expectation of her being able to compete even with the Molly Swash successfully; more especially if brought up upon a bow-line. Her commander watched the receding form of the

brig with the closest attention until it was entirely swallowed up in the darkness, under the land, towards which he then steered himself, in order to prevent the Swash from hauling up, and turning to windward, close in, under the shadows of the island. Against this manœuvre, however, the latter had taken an effectual precaution, and her people were satisfied that escape in that way was impossible. On the other hand, the steamer was doing very well. Driven by the breeze, and propelled by her wheels, away she went, edging further and further from the island, as the person from the Custom-house succeeded, as it might be, inch by inch, in persuading the captain of the necessity of his so doing. At length, a sail was dimly seen ahead, and then no doubt was entertained that the brig had got to the northward and eastward of them. Half an hour brought the steamer to the side of this sail, which turned out be a brig that had come over the shoals, and was beating up into the ocean, on her way to one of the southern ports. Her captain said there had nothing passed to the eastward.

Round went the steamer, and in went all her canvas. Ten minutes later, the look-out saw a sail to the westward, standing before the wind. Odd as it might seem, the steamer's people now fancied they were sure of the Swash. There she was, coming directly for them, with square yards. The distance was short, or a vessel could not have been seen by that light, and the two craft were soon near each other. A gun was actually cleared on board the steamer, before it was ascertained that the stranger was the schooner! It was now midnight, and as nothing else was in sight but the coasting brig, reluctantly the revenue people gave the matter up, the Molly Swash having again eluded them, though by means unknown.

CHAPTER IV.

Leander dived for love. Leucadia's cliff
The Lesbian Sappho leap'd from in a miff,
To punish Phaon; Icarus went dead,
Because the wax did not continue stiff;
And, had he minded what his father said,
He had not given name unto his watery bed."
" SANDS.

WE must now advance the time several days, and change the scene to a distant part of the ocean; within the tropics, indeed. The females had suffered slight attacks of sea-sickness, and recovered from them, and the brig was safe from all her pursuers. The manner of Spike's escape was simple enough, and without any necromancy. While the steamer, on the one hand, was standing away to the northward and eastward, in order to head him off, and the schooner was edging in with the island, in order to prevent his beating up to windward of it, within its shadows, the brig had run close round the northern margin of the land, and hauled up to leeward of the island, passing

between it and the steamer. All this time her movements were concealed from the schooner by the island itself, and from the steamer by its shadow and dark back-ground, aided by the distance. By making short tacks, this expedient answered perfectly well, and, at the very moment when the two revenue vessels met, at midnight, about three leagues to leeward of Blok Island, the brigantine, Molly Swash, was just clearing its most weatherly point, on the larboard tack, and coming out exactly at the spot where the steamer was when first seen that afternoon. Spike stood to the westward, until he was certain of having the island fairly between him and his pursuers, when he went about, and filled away on his course; running out to sea again on an easy bowline. At sunrise the next day he was fifty miles to the southward and eastward of Montauk; the schooner was going into New London, her officers and people quite chop-fallen, and the steamer was paddling up Sound, her captain being fully persuaded the runaways had returned in the direction from which they had come, and might yet be picked up in that quarter.

The weather was light, just a week after the events related in the close of the last chapter. By this time the brig had got within the influence of the trades, and, it being the intention of Spike to pass to the southward of Cuba, he had so far profited by the westerly winds, as to get well to the eastward of the Mona Passage, the strait through which he intended to shape his course on making the islands. Early on that morning Mrs. Budd had taken her seat on the trunk of the cabin, with a complacent air, and arranged her netting, some slight passages of gallantry on the part of the captain having induced her to propose netting him a purse. Biddy was going to and fro, in quest of silks and needles, her mistress having become slightly capricious in her tastes of late, and giving her, on all such occasions, at least a double allowance of occupation. As for Rose, she sat reading beneath the shade of the coach-house deck, while the handsome young mate was within three feet of her, working up his logarithms, but within the sanctuary of his own state-room; the open door and window of which, however, gave him every facility he

could desire to relieve his mathematics, by gazing at the sweet countenance of his charming neighbour. Jack Tier and Josh were both passing to and fro, as is the wont of stewards, between the camboose and the cabin, the breakfast table being just then in the course of preparation. In all other respects, always excepting the man at the wheel, who stood within a fathom of Rose, Spike had the quarter-deck to himself, and did not fail to pace its weather side with an air that denoted the master and owner. After exhibiting his sturdy, but short, person in this manner to the admiring eyes of all beholders, for some time, the captain suddenly took a seat at the side of the relict, and dropped into the following discourse.

"The weather is moderate, Madam Budd; quite moderate," observed Spike, a sentimental turn coming over him at the moment. "What I call moderate and agreeable."

"So much the better for us: the ladies are fond of moderation, sir."

"Not in admiration, Madam Budd—ha! ha! ha! no, not in admiration. *Immoderation* is

what they like when it comes to *that*. I'm a single man, but I know that the ladies like admiration—mind where you're sheering to," the captain said, interrupting himself a little fiercely, considering the nature of the subject, in consequence of Jack Tier's having trodden on his toe in passing—"or I'll teach you the navigation of the quarter-deck, Mr. Burgoo!"

"Moderation—moderation, my good captain," said the simpering relict. "As to admiration, I confess that it is agreeable to us ladies; more especially when it comes from gentlemen of sense, and intelligence, and experience."

Rose fidgeted, having heard every word that was said, and her face flushed; for she doubted not that Harry's ears were as good as her own. As for the man at the wheel, he turned the tobacco over in his mouth, hitched up his trousers, and appeared interested, though somewhat mystified—the conversation was what he would have termed "talking dictionary," and he had some curiosity to learn how the captain would work his way out of it. It is probable that Spike himself had some similar gleamings

of the difficulties of his position, for he looked a little troubled, though still resolute. It was the first time he had ever lain yard-arm and yard-arm with a widow, and he had long entertained a fancy that such a situation was trying to the best of men.

"Yes, Madam Budd, yes," he said, "experience and sense carry weight with 'em, wherever they go. I'm glad to find that you entertain these just notions of us gentlemen, and make a difference between boys and them that's seen and known exper'ence. For my part, I count youngsters under forty as so much lumber about decks, as to any comforts and calculations in keepin' a family, as a family *ought* to be kept."

Mrs. Budd looked interested, but she remained silent on hearing this remark, as became her sex.

"Every man ought to settle in life, some time or other, Madam Budd, accordin' to my notion, though no man ought to be in a boyish haste about it," continued the captain. "Now, in my own case, I 've been so busy all my youth—not that I 'm very old now, but

I 'm no boy—but all my younger days have been passed in, trying to make things meet, in a way to put any lady who might take a fancy to me——"

"Oh! captain—that is *too* strong! The ladies do not take fancies for gentlemen, but the gentlemen take fancies for ladies!"

"Well, well, you know what I mean, Madam Budd, and so long as the parties understand each other, a word dropped, or a word put into a charter-party, makes it neither stronger nor weaker. There 's a time, howsomever, in every man's life, when he begins to think of settling down, and of considerin' himself as a sort of mooring-chain, for children and the likes of them to make fast to. Such is my natur', I will own; and ever since I 've got to be intimate in your family, Madam Budd, that sentiment has grown stronger and stronger in me, till it has got to be uppermost in all my idees. Bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, as a body might say."

Mrs. Budd now looked more than interested, for she looked a little confused, and Rose began to tremble for her aunt. It was evident

that the parties most conspicuous in this scene were not at all conscious that they were overheard, the intensity of their attention being too much concentrated on what was passing to allow of any observation without their own narrow circle. What may be thought still more extraordinary, but what in truth was the most natural of all, each of the parties was so intently bent on his, or her, own train of thought, that neither in the least suspected any mistake.

"Grown with your growth, and strengthened with your strength," rejoined the relict, smiling kindly enough on the captain to have encouraged a much more modest man than he happened to be.

"Yes, Madam Budd—very just that remark; grown with my strength, and strengthened with my growth, as one might say; though I've not done much at growing for a good many years. Your late husband, Captain Budd, often remarked how very early I got my growth, and rated me as an 'able-bodied' hand when most lads think it an honour to be placed among the 'or'naries.'"

The relict looked grave, and she wondered at any man's being so singular as to allude to a first husband, at the very moment he was thinking of offering himself for a second. As for herself, she had not uttered so many words in the last four years, as she had uttered in that very conversation, without making some allusion to her "poor dear Mr. Budd." The reader is not to do injustice to the captain's widow, however, by supposing for a moment that she was actually so weak as to feel any tenderness for a man like Spike, which would be doing a great wrong to both her taste and her judgment, as Rose well knew, even while most annoyed by the conversation she could not but overhear. All that influenced the good relict was that besetting weakness of her sex, which renders admiration so universally acceptable, and predisposes a female, as it might be, to listen to a suitor with indulgence and some little show of kindness, even when resolute to reject him. As for Rose, to own the truth, her aunt did not give her a thought as yet, notwithstanding Spike was getting to be so sentimental.

"Yes, your late excellent and honourable consort always said that I got my growth sooner than any youngster he ever fell in with," resumed the captain after a short pause; exciting fresh wonder in his companion that he *would* persist in lugging in the "dear departed" so very unseasonably. "I am a great admirer of all the Budd family, my good lady, and only wish my connexion with it had never tarminated, if tarminated it can be called."

"It need not be terminated, Capt. Spike, so long as friendship exists in the human heart."

"Ay, so it is always with you ladies; when a man is bent on suthin' closer and more interestin' like, you're for putting it off on friendship. Now friendship is good enough in its way, Madam Budd, but friendship is n't *love!*"

"*Love!*" echoed the widow, fairly starting, though she looked down at her netting, and looked as confused as she knew how. "That is a very decided word, Captain Spike, and should never be mentioned to a woman's ear lightly."

So the captain now appeared to think, too, for no sooner had he delivered himself of the

important monosyllable, than he left the widow's side and began to pace the deck, as it might be to moderate his own ardour. As for Rose, she blushed, if her more practised aunt did not, while Harry Mulford laughed heartily, taking good care, however, not to be heard. The man at the wheel turned the tobacco again, gave his trousers another hitch, and wondered anew whither the skipper was bound. But the drollest manifestation of surprise came from Josh, the steward, who was passing along the lee-side of the quarter-deck, with a teapot in his hand, when the energetic manner of the captain sent the words "friendship is n't *love*" to his ears. This induced him to stop for a single instant, and to cast a wondering glance behind him; after which he moved on towards the galley, mumbling as he went—"Lub! what *he* want of lub, or what lub want of *him!* Well, I do t'ink Captain Spike bowse his jib out pretty 'arly dis mornin'."

Captain Spike soon got over the effects of his effort, and the confusion of the relict did not last any material length of time. As the former had gone so far, however, he thought

the present an occasion as good as another to bring matters to a crisis.

"Our sentiments sometimes get to be so strong, Madam Budd," resumed the lover, as he took his seat again on the trunk, "that they run away with us. Men is liable to be run away with as well as ladies. I once had a ship run away with me, and a pretty time we had of it. Did you ever hear of a ship's running away with her people, Madam Budd, just as your horse ran away with your buggy?"

"I suppose I must have heard of such things, sir, my education having been so maritime, though just at this moment I cannot recall an instance. When my horse ran away the buggy was cap-asided, and your vessel cap-asided on the occasion you mention?"

"No, Madam Budd, no. The ship was off the wind at the time I mean, and vessels do not capsize when off the wind. I'll tell you how it happened. We was a scuddin' under a goose-wing foresail—"

"Yes, yes," interrupted the relict eagerly. "I've often heard of that sail, which is small, and used only in tempests."

"Heavy weather, Madam Budd—only in heavy weather."

"It is amazing to me, captain, how you seamen manage to weigh the weather. I have often heard of light weather and heavy weather, but never fairly understood the manner of weighing it."

"Why we *do* make out to ascertain the difference," replied the captain, a little puzzled for an answer, "and I suppose it must be by means of the barometer, which goes up and down like a pair of scales. But the time I mean we was a scuddin' under a goose-wing foresail—"

"A sail made of goose's wings, and a beautiful object it must be; like some of the caps and cloaks that come from the islands, which are all of feathers, and charming objects are they. I beg pardon—you had your goose's wings spread—"

"Yes, Madam Budd, yes; we was steering for a Mediterranean port, intending to clear a mole-head, when a sea took us under the larboard quarter, gave us such a sheer to-port as sent our cat-head ag'in a spile, and raked away the chain-plates of the top-mast back-stays,

bringing down all the for'ard hamper about our ears."

This description produced such a confusion in the mind of the widow, that she was glad when it came to an end. As for the captain, fearful that the "goose's wings" might be touched upon again, he thought it wisest to attempt another flight on those of Cupid.

"As I was sayin', Madam Budd, friendship is n't *love;* no, not a bit of it! Friendship is a common sort of feelin', but love, as you must know by experience, Madam Budd, is an uncommon sort of feelin'."

"Fie, Captain Spike, gentlemen should never allude to ladies knowing anything about love. Ladies *respect,* and *admire,* and *esteem,* and have a *regard* for gentlemen: but it is almost too strong to talk about their love."

"Yes, Madam Budd, yes; I dare say it *is* so, and *ought* to be so; and I ask pardon for having said as much as I did. But my love for your niece is of so animated and lastin' a natur', that I scarce knew what I did say."

"Captain Spike, you amaze me! I declare I

can hardly breathe for astonishment. My niece! Surely you do not mean Rosy!"

"Who else should I mean? My love for Miss Rose is so very decided and animated, I tell you, Madam Budd, that I will not answer for the consequences should you not consent to her marryin' me."

"I can scarce believe my ears! You, Stephen Spike, and an old friend of her uncle's, wishing to marry his niece."

"Just so, Madam Budd; that's it to a shavin'. The regard I have for the whole family is so great, that nothin' less than the hand of Miss Rose in marriage can what I call mitigate my feelin's."

Now the relict had not one spark of tenderness herself in behalf of Spike, while she did love Rose better than any human being, her own self excepted. But she had viewed all the sentiment of that morning, and all the fine speeches of the captain, very differently from what the present state of things told her she ought to have viewed them; and she felt the mortification natural to her situation. The captain was so much bent on the attainment of

his own object, that he saw nothing else, and was even unconscious that his extraordinary and somewhat loud discourse had been overheard. Least of all did he suspect that his admiration had been mistaken, and that in what he called "courtin'" the niece, he had been all the while "courtin'" the aunt. But little apt as she was to discover any thing, Mrs. Budd had enough of her sex's discernment in a matter of this sort, to perceive that she had fallen into an awkward mistake, and enough of her sex's pride to resent it. Taking her work in her hand, she left her seat and descended to the cabin, with quite as much dignity in her manner as it was in the power of one of her height and "build" to express. What is the most extraordinary, neither she nor Spike ever ascertained that their whole dialogue had been overheard. Spike continued to pace the quarter-deck for several minutes, scarce knowing what to think of the relict's manner, when his attention was suddenly drawn to other matters by the familiar cry of "sail-ho!"

This was positively the first vessel with which the Molly Swash had fallen in with

since she lost sight of two or three craft that had passed her in the distance, as she left the American coast. As usual, this cry brought all hands on deck, and Mulford out of his state-room.

It has been stated already that the brig was just beginning to feel the trades, and it might have been added, to see the mountains of San Domingo. The winds had been variable for the last day or two, and they still continued light, and disposed to be unsteady, ranging from north-east to south-east, with a preponderance in favour of the first point. At the cry of "sail-ho!" every body looked in the indicated direction, which was west, a little northerly, but for a long time without success. The cry had come from aloft, and Mulford went up as high as the fore-top before he got any glimpse of the stranger at all. He had slung a glass, and Spike was unusually anxious to know the result of his examination.

"Well, Mr. Mulford, what do you make of her?" he called out as soon as the mate announced that he saw the strange vessel.

"Wait a moment, sir, tlil I get a look,—she's a long way off, and scarcely visible."

"Well, sir, well?"

"I can only see the heads of her topgallant-sails. She seems a ship steering to the southward, with as many kites flying as an Indiaman in the trades. She looks as if she were carrying royal stun'-sails, sir."

"The devil she does! Such a chap must not only be in a hurry, but he must be strong handed to give himself all this trouble in such light and variable winds. Are his yards square? —Is he man-of-warish?"

"There's no telling, sir, at this distance; though I rather think it's stun'-sails that I see. Go down and get your breakfast, and in half an hour I'll give a better account of him."

This was done, Mrs. Budd appearing at the table with great dignity in her manner. Although she had so naturally supposed that Spike's attentions had been intended for herself, she was rather mortified than hurt on discovering her mistake. Her appetite, consequently, was not impaired, though her stomach might have been said to be very full. The meal passed off without any scene, notwithstanding, and Spike soon reappeared on

deck, still masticating the last mouthful, like a man in a hurry, and a good deal *à la Américaine*. Mulford saw his arrival, and immediately levelled his glass again.

"Well, what news now, sir?" called out the captain. "You must have a better chance at him by this time, for I can see the chap from off the coach-house here."

"Ay, ay, sir, he's a bit nearer, certainly. I should say that craft is a ship under stun'-sails, looking to the eastward of south, and that there are caps with gold bands on her quarter-deck."

"How low down can you see her?" demanded Spike in a voice of thunder.

So emphatic and remarkable was the captain's manner in putting this question, that the mate cast a look of surprise beneath him ere he answered it. A look with the glass succeeded, when the reply was given.

"Ay, ay, sir; there can be no mistake,—it's a cruizer, you may depend on it. I can see the heads of her topsails now, and they are so square and symmetrical, that gold bands are below, beyond all doubt."

"Perhaps he's a Frenchman,—Johnny Crepaud keeps cruizers in these seas as well as the rest on 'em."

"Johnny Crepaud's craft don't spread such arms, sir. The ship is either English or American; and he's heading for the Mona Passage as well as ourselves."

"Come down, sir, come down,—there's work to be done as soon as you have breakfasted."

Mulford did come down, and he was soon seated at the table with both Josh and Jack Tier for attendants. The aunt and the niece were in their own cabin, a few yards distant, with the door open.

"What a fuss 'e cap'in make 'bout dat sail," grumbled Josh, who had been in the brig so long that he sometimes took liberties with even Spike himself. "What good he t'ink 'twill do to measure him, inch by inch? By e'em by he get alongside, and den 'e ladies can tell all about him."

"He nat'rally wishes to know who gets alongside," put in Tier, somewhat apologetically.

"What matter dat? All sort of folk get alongside of Molly Swash; and what good it do 'em? Yoh! yoh! yoh! I *do* remember such times vid 'e ole hussey."

"What old hussey do you mean?" demanded Jack Tier, a little fiercely, and in a way to draw Mulford's eyes from the profile of Rose's face to the visages of his two attendants.

"Come, come, gentlemen, if you please; recollect where you are," interrupted the mate authoritatively. "You are not now squabbling in your galley, but are in the cabin. What is to you, Tier, if Josh does call the brig an old hussey; she is old, as we all know, and years are respectable; and as for her being a 'hussey,' that is a term of endearment sometimes. I've heard the captain himself call the Molly a 'hussey' fifty times, and he loves her as he does the apple of his eye."

This interference put an end to the gathering storm as a matter of course, and the two disputants shortly after passed on deck. No sooner was the coast clear than Rose stood in the door of her own cabin.

"Do you think the strange vessel is an American?" she asked eagerly.

"It is impossible to say—English or American I make no doubt. But why do you inquire?"

"Both my aunt and myself desire to quit the brig, and if the stranger should prove to be an American vessel of war, might not the occasion be favourable?"

"And what reason can you give for desiring to do so?"

"What signifies a reason?" answered Rose with spirit. "Spike is not our master, and we can come and go as we may see fit."

"But a reason must be given to satisfy the commander of the vessel of war. Craft of that character are very particular about the passengers they receive; nor would it be altogether wise in two unprotected females to go on board a cruizer, unless in a case of the most obvious necessity."

"Will not what has passed this morning be thought a sufficient reason?" added Rose, drawing nearer to the mate, and dropping her voice so as not to be heard by her aunt.

Mulford smiled as he gazed at the earnest but attractive countenance of his charming companion.

"And who could tell it, or *how* could it be told? Would the commander of a vessel of war incur the risk of receiving such a person as yourself on board his vessel, for the reason that the master of the craft she was in when he fell in with her desired to marry her?"

Rose appeared vexed, but she was at once made sensible that it was not quite as easy to change her vessel at sea, as to step into a strange door in a town. She drew slowly back into her own cabin silent and thoughtful; her aunt pursuing her netting the whole time with an air of dignified industry.

"Well, Mr. Mulford, well," called out Spike at the head of the cabin stairs, "what news from the coffee?"

"All ready, sir," answered the mate, exchanging significant glances with Rose. "I shall be up in a moment."

That moment soon came, and Mulford was ready for duty. While below, Spike had caused certain purchases to be got aloft, and the main

hatch was open and the men collected around it, in readiness to proceed with the work. Harry asked no questions, for the preparations told him what was about to be done, but passing below, he took charge of the duty there, while the captain superintended the part that was conducted on deck. In the course of the next hour eight twelve-pound carronades were sent up out of the hold, and mounted in as many of the ports which lined the bulwarks of the brigantine. The men seemed to be accustomed to the sort of work in which they were now engaged, and soon had their light batteries in order, and ready for service. In the mean time the two vessels kept on their respective courses, and by the time the guns were mounted, there was a sensible difference in their relative positions. The stranger had drawn so near the brigantine as to be very obvious from the latter's deck, while the brigantine had drawn so much nearer to the islands of San Domingo and Porto Rico, as to render the opening between them, the well-known Mona Passage, distinctly visible.

Of all this Spike appeared to be fully aware,

for he quitted the work several times before it was finished, in order to take a look at the stranger, and at the land. When the batteries were arranged, he and Mulford, each provided with a glass, gave a few minutes to a more deliberate examination of the first.

"That's the Mona ahead of us," said the captain; "of that there can be no question, and a very pretty land-fall you've made of it, Harry. I'll allow you to be as good a navigator as floats."

"Nevertheless, sir, you have not seen fit to let me know whither the brig is really bound this voyage."

"No matter for that, young man—no matter, as yet. All in good time. When I tell you to lay your course for the Mona, you can lay your course for the Mona; and, as soon as we are through the passage, I'll let you know what is wanted next—if that chap who is nearing us will let me."

"And why should any vessel wish to molest us on our passage, Captain Spike?"

"Why, sure enough! It's war times, you know, and war times always bring trouble to the trader—though it sometimes brings profit too."

As Spike concluded, he gave his mate a knowing wink, which the other understood to mean that he expected himself some of the unusual profit to which he alluded. Mulford did not relish this secret communication, for the past had induced him to suspect the character of the trade in which his commander was accustomed to engage. Without making any sort of reply, or encouraging the confidence by even a smile, he levelled his glass at the stranger, as did Spike, the instant he ceased to grin.

"That's one of Uncle Sam's fellows!" exclaimed the captain, dropping the glass. "I'd swear to the chap in any admiralty court on 'arth."

"'Tis is a vessel of war out of all doubt," returned the mate, "and under a cloud of canvas. I can make out the heads of her courses now, and see that she is carrying hard, for a craft that is almost close-hauled."

"Ay, ay; no merchantman keep his light stun'-sails set as near the wind as that fellow's going. He's a big chap, too—a frigate, at least, by his canvas."

"I do not know, sir—they build such heavy corvettes now-a-days, that I should rather take her for one of them. They tell me ships are now sent to sea which mount only two-and-twenty guns, but which measure quite a thousand tons."

"With thunderin' batteries of course."

"With short thirty-two's and a few rapping sixty-eight Paixhans—or Columbiads, as they ought in justice to be called."

"And you think this chap likely to be a craft of that sort?"

"Nothing is more probable, sir. Government has several, and, since this war has commenced, it has been sending off cruizer after cruizer into the Gulf. The Mexicans dare not send a vessel of war to sea, which would be sending them to Norfolk, or New York, at once; but no one can say when they may begin to make a prey of our commerce."

"They have taken nothing as yet, Mr. Mulford, and, to tell you the truth, I'd much rather fall in with one of Don Montezuma's craft than one of Uncle Sam's."

Captain Spike, unless you think, now our guns are mounted, we can handle a Mexican," returned Mulford coldly. "At all events, it is some answer to those who ask 'What is the navy about?' that months of war have gone by, and not an American has been captured. Take away that navy, and the insurance offices in Wall-street would tumble like a New York party-wall in a fire."

"Nevertheless, I'd rather take my chance, just now, with Don Montezuma than with Uncle Sam."

Mulford did not reply, though the earnest manner in which Spike expressed himself, helped to increase his distrust touching the nature of the voyage. With *him* the captain had no further conference, but it was different as respects the boatswain. That worthy was called aft, and for half an hour he and Spike were conversing apart, keeping their eyes fastened on the strange vessel most of the time.

It was noon before all uncertainty touching the character of the stranger ceased. By that time, however, both vessels were entering the Mona Passage; the brig well to windward, on

the Porto Rico side; while the ship was so far to leeward as to be compelled to keep every thing close hauled, in order to weather the island. The hull of the last could now be seen, and no doubt was entertained about her being a cruizer, and of some size, too. Spike thought she was a frigate; but Mulford still inclined to the opinion that she was one of the new ships; perhaps a real corvette, or with a light spar-deck over her batteries. Two or three of the new vessels were known to be thus fitted, and this might be one. At length all doubt on the subject ceased, the stranger setting an American ensign, and getting so near as to make it apparent that she had but a single line of guns. Still she was a large ship, and the manner that she ploughed through the brine, close-hauled as she was, extorted admiration even from Spike.

"We had better begin to shorten sail, Mr. Mulford," the captain at length most reluctantly remarked. "We might give the chap the slip, perhaps, by keeping close in under Porto Rico, but he would give us a long chase, and might drive us away to windward, when I

wish to keep off between Cuba and Jamaica. He's a traveller; look, how he stands up to it under that cloud of canvas."

Mulford was slow to commence on the studding-sails, and the cruiser was getting nearer and nearer. At length a gun was fired, and a heavy shot fell about two hundred yards short of the brig, and a little out of line with her. On this hint, Spike turned the hands up, and began to shorten sail. In ten minutes the Swash was under her topsail, mainsail, and jib, with her light square-sails hanging in the gear, and all the steering canvas in. In ten minutes more the cruiser was so near as to admit of the faces of the three or four men whose heads were above the hammock-cloths being visible, when she too began to fold her wings. In went *her* royals, topgallant-sails, and various kites, as it might be by some common muscular agency; and up went her courses. Every thing was done at once. By this time she was crossing the brig's wake, looking exceedingly beautiful, with her topsails lifting, her light sails blowing out, and even her heavy courses fluttering in the breeze. There flew the glo-

rious stars and stripes also; of brief existence, but full of recollections! The moment she had room her helm went up, her bows fell off, and down she came, on the weather quarter of the Swash, so near as to render a trumpet nearly useless.

On board the brig everybody was on deck; even the relict having forgotten her mortification in curiosity. On board the cruiser no one was visible, with the exception of a few men in each top, and a group of gold-banded caps on the poop. Among these officers stood the captain, a red-faced, middle-aged man, with the usual signs of his rank about him; and at his side was the lynx-eyed first lieutenant. The surgeon and purser were also there, though they stood a little apart from the more nautical dignitaries. The hail that followed came out of a trumpet that was thrust through the mizen-rigging; the officer who used it taking his cue from the poop.

"What brig is that?" commenced the discourse.

"The Molly Swash, of New York, Stephen Spike, master."

"Where from, and whither bound?"

"From New York, and bound to Key West and a market."

A pause succeeded this answer, during which the officers on the poop of the cruiser held some discourse with him of the trumpet. During the interval the cruiser ranged fairly up abeam.

"You are well to windward of your port, sir," observed he of the trumpet, significantly.

"I know it; but it's war-times, and I didn't know but there might be picaroons hovering about the Havana."

"The coast is clear, and our cruisers will keep it so. I see you have a battery, sir!"

"Ay, ay; some old guns that I've had aboard these ten years; they're useful, sometimes, in these seas."

"Very true. I'll range ahead of you, and as soon as you've room, I'll thank you to heave-to. I wish to send a boat on board you."

Spike was sullen enough on receiving this order, but there was no help for it. He was now in the jaws of the lion, and his wisest course was to submit to the penalties of his

position with the best grace he could. The necessary orders were consequently given, and the brig no sooner got room than she came by the wind and backed her topsail. The cruiser went about, and passing to windward, backed her main-topsail just forward of the Swash's beam. Then the latter lowered a boat, and sent it, with a lieutenant and a midshipman in its stern-sheets, on board the brigantine. As the cutter approached, Spike went to the gangway to receive the strangers.

Although there will be frequent occasion to mention this cruiser, the circumstances are of so recent occurrence, that we do not choose to give either her name, or that of any one belonging to her. We shall, consequently, tell the curious, who may be disposed to turn to their navy-lists and blue-books, that the search will be of no use, as all the names we shall use, in reference to this cruise, will be fictitious. As much of the rest of our story as the reader please may be taken for gospel; but we tell him frankly, that we have thought it most expedient to adopt assumed names, in connexion with this vessel and all her officers. There are

good reasons for so doing; and, among others, is that of abstaining from arming a *clique* to calumniate her commander, (who, by the way, like another commander in the Gulf that might be named, and who has actually been exposed to the sort of *tracasserie* to which there is allusion, is one of the ablest men in the service,) in order to put another in his place.

The officer who now came over the side of the Swash we shall call Wallace; he was the second lieutenant of the vessel of war. He was about thirty, and the midshipman who followed him was a well-grown lad of nineteen. Both had a decided man-of-war look, and both looked a little curiously at the vessel that they had boarded.

"Your servant, sir," said Wallace, touching his cap in reply to Spike's somewhat awkward bow. "Your brig is the Molly Swash, Stephen Spike, bound from New York to Key West and a market?"

"You've got it all as straight, lieutenant, as if you was a readin' it from the log."

"The next thing, sir, is to know of what your cargo is composed?"

"Flour; eight hundred barrels of flour."

"Flour! Would you not do better to carry that to Liverpool? The Mississippi must be almost turned into paste by the quantity of flour it floats to market."

"Notwithstanding that, lieutenant, I know Uncle Sam's economy so well, as to believe I shall part with every barrel of my flour to his contractors, at a handsome profit."

"You read Whig newspapers principally, I rather think, Mr. Spike," answered Wallace, in his cool, deliberate way, smiling, however, as he spoke.

We may just as well say here, that nature intended this gentleman for a second lieutenant, the very place he filled. He was a capital second lientenant, while he would not have earned his rations as first. So well was he assured of this peculiarity in his moral composition, that he did not wish to be the first lieutenant of anything in which he sailed. A respectable seaman, a well-read and intelligent man, a capital deck officer, or watch officer, he was too indolent to desire to be anything more, and was as happy as the day was long, in the

easy berth he filled. The first lieutenant had been his messmate as a midshipman, and ranked him but two on the list, in his present commission; but he did not envy him in the least. On the contrary, one of his greatest pleasures was to get "Working Willy," as he called his senior, over a glass of wine, or a tumbler of "hot stuff," and make him recount the labours of the day. On such occasions, Wallace never failed to compare the situation of "Working Willy" with his own gentlemanlike ease and independence. As second lieutenant, his rank raised him above most of the unpleasant duties of the ship, while it did not raise him high enough to plunge him into the never-ending labours of his senior. He delighted to call himself the "ship's gentleman," a *soubriquet* he well deserved, on more accounts than one.

"You read Whig newspapers principally, I rather think, Mr. Spike," answered the lieutenant, as has been just mentioned, "while we on board the Poughkeepsie indulge in looking over the columns of the Union, as well as over those of the Intelligencer, when by good

luck we can lay our hands on a stray number."

"That ship, then, is called the Poughkeepsie, is she, sir?" inquired Spike.

"Such is her name, thanks to a most beneficent and sage provision of Congress, which has extended its parental care over the navy so far as to imagine that a man chosen by the people to exercise so many of the functions of a sovereign, is not fit to name a ship. All our two and three deckers are to be called after states; the frigates after rivers; and the sloops after towns. Thus it is that our craft has the honour to be called the United States' ship the 'Poughkeepsie,' instead of the 'Arrow,' or the 'Wasp,' or the 'Curlew,' or the 'Petrel,' as might otherwise have been the case. But the wisdom of Congress is manifest, for the plan teaches us sailors geography."

"Yes, sir, one can pick up a bit of l'arnin' in that way cheap. The Poughkeepsie, Cap——?"

"The United States' ship Poughkeepsie, 20, Captain Adam Mull, at your service. But, Mr. Spike, you will allow me to look at your

papers. It is a duty I like, for it can be performed quietly, and without any fuss."

Spike looked distrustfully at his new acquaintance, but went for his vessel's papers without any very apparent hesitation. Every thing was *en règle*, and Wallace soon got through with the clearance, manifest, &c. Indeed the cargo, on paper at least, was of the simplest and least complicated character, being composed of nothing but eight hundred barrels of flour.

"It all looks very well on paper, Mr. Spike," added the boarding officer. "With your permission, we will next see how it looks in sober reality. I perceive your main hatch is open, and I suppose it will be no difficult matter just to take a glance at your hold."

"Here is a ladder, sir, that will take us at once to the half-deck, for I have no proper 'twixt decks in this craft; she's too small for that sort of out-fit."

"No matter, she has a hold, I suppose, and that can contain cargo. Take me to it by the shortest road, Mr. Spike, for I am no great admirer of trouble."

Spike now led the way below, Wallace following, leaving the midshipman, who had fallen into conversation with the relict and her pretty niece, on deck. The half-deck of the brigantine contained spare sails, provisions, and water, as usual, while quantities of old canvas lay scattered over the cargo; more especially in the wake of the hatches, of which there were two besides that which led from the quarter-deck.

"Flour to the number of eight hundred barrels," said Wallace, striking his foot against a barrel that lay within his reach. "The cargo is somewhat singular to come from New York, going to Key West, my dear Spike?"

"I suppose you know what sort of a place Key West is, sir; a bit of an island in which there is scarce so much as a potato grows."

"Ay, ay, sir; I know Key West very well, having been in and out a dozen times. All eatables are imported, turtle excepted. But flour can be brought down the Mississippi so much cheaper than it can be brought from New York."

"Have you any idee, lieutenant, what Uncle

Sam's men are paying for it at New Orleens, just to keep soul and bodies together among the so'gers?"

"That may be true, sir,—quite true, I dare say, Mr. Spike. Have n't you a bit of a chair that a fellow can sit down on,—this half-deck of your's is none of the most comfortable places to stand in. Thank you, sir,—thank you with all my heart. What lots of old sails you have scattered about the hold, especially in the wake of the hatches!"

"Why the craft being little more than in good ballast trim, I keep the hatches off to air her; and the spray might spit down upon the flour at odd times but for them 'ere sails."

"Ay, a prudent caution. So you think Uncle Sam's people will be after this flour as soon as they learn you have got it snug in at West Key?"

"What more likely, sir? You know how it is with our government,—always wrong, whatever it does! and I can show you paragraphs in letters written from New Orleens, which tell us that Uncle Sam is paying 75 and 80 per cent. more for flour than any body else."

"He must be a flush old chap to be able to do that, Spike."

"Flush! I rather think he is. Do you know that he is spendin', accordin' to approved accounts, at this blessed moment, as much as half a million a-day? I own a wish to be pickin' up some of the coppers while they are scattered about so plentifully."

"Half a million a-day! why that is only at the rate of 182,000,000 dollars per annum; a mere trifle, Spike, that is scarce worth mentioning among us mariners."

"It's so in the newspapers, I can swear, lieutenant."

"Ay, ay, and the newspapers will swear to it too, and they that gave the newspapers their cue. But no matter, our business is with this flour. Will you sell us a barrel or two for our mess? I heard the caterer say we should want flour in the course of a week or so."

Spike seemed embarrassed, though not to a degree to awaken suspicion in his companion.

"I never sold cargo at sea, long as I've sailed and owned a craft," he answered, as if uncertain what to do. "If you'll pay the

price I expect to get in the Gulf, and will take *ten* barrels, I do n't know but we may make a trade on 't. I shall only ask expected prices."

"Which will be——"

"Ten dollars a barrel. For one hundred silver dollars I will put into your boat ten barrels of the very best brand known in the western country."

"This is dealing rather more extensively than I anticipated, but we will reflect on it."

Wallace now indolently arose and ascended to the quarter-deck, followed by Spike, who continued to press the flour on him, as if anxious to make money. But the lieutenant hesitated about paying a price as high as ten dollars, or to take a quantity as large as ten barrels.

"Our mess is no great matter after all," he said carelessly. "Four lieutenants, the purser, two doctors, the master, and a marine officer, and you get us all. Nine men could never eat ten barrels of flour, my dear Spike, you will see for yourself, with the quantity of excellent bread we carry. You forget the bread."

"Not a bit of it, Mr. Wallace, since that is your name. But such flour as this of mine has not been seen in the Gulf this many a day. I ought in reason to ask twelve dollars for it, and insist on such a ship as your'n 's taking twenty instead of the ten barrels."

"I thank you, sir, the ten will more than suffice; unless, indeed, the captain wants some for the cabin. How is it with your steerage messes, Mr. Archer,—Do *you* want any flour?"

"We draw a little from the ship, according to rule, sir, but we can't go as many puddings latterly as we could before we touched last at the Havanna," answered the laughing midshipman. "There is n't a fellow among us, sir, that could pay a shore-boat for landing him, should we go in again before the end of another month. I never knew such a place as Havanna. They say midshipmen's money melts there twice as soon as lieutenants' money."

"It's clear, then, *you'll* not take any of the ten. I am afraid after all, Mr. Spike, we cannot trade, unless you will consent to let me have two barrels. I'll venture on two at ten dollars, high as the price is."

"I shouldn't forgive myself in six months for making so bad a bargain, lieutenant, so we'll say no more about it, if you please."

"Here is a lady that wishes to say a word to you, Mr. Wallace, before we go back to the ship, if you are at leisure to hear her, or *them* —for there are two of them," put in Archer.

At this moment Mrs. Budd was approaching with a dignified step, while Rose followed timidly a little in the rear. Wallace was a good deal surprised at this application, and Spike was quite as much provoked. As for Mulford, he watched the interview from a distance, a great deal more interested in the result than he cared should be known, more especially to his commanding officer. Its object was to get a passage in the vessel of war.

"You are an officer of that Uncle Sam vessel," commenced Mrs. Budd, who thought that she would so much more command the respect and attention of her listener, by showing him early how familiar she was with even the slang dialect of the seas.

"I have the honour, ma'am, to belong to that Uncle Sam craft," answered Wallace

gravely, though he bowed politely at the same time, looking intently at the beautiful girl in the back-ground as he did so.

"So I've been told, sir. She's a beautiful vessel, lieutenant, and is full jiggered I perceive."

For the first time in his life, or at least for the first time since his first cruise, Wallace wore a mystified look, being absolutely at a loss to imagine what "full jiggered" could mean. He only looked, therefore, for he did not answer.

"Mrs. Budd means that you've a full *rigged* craft," put in Spike, anxious to have a voice in the conference, "this vessel being only a *half*-rigged brig."

"Oh! ay; yes, yes,—the lady is quite right. We are full jiggered from our dead-eyes to our eye-bolts."

"I thought as much, sir, from your ground-hamper and top-tackles," added the relict smiling. "For my part there is nothing in nature that I so much admire as a full jiggered ship, with her canvas out of the bolt-ropes, and her clew-lines and clew-garnets braced sharp, and her yards all abroad."

"Yes, ma'am, it is just as you say, a very charming spectacle. Our baby was born full grown, and with all her hamper aloft, just as you see her. Some persons refer vessels to art, but I think you are quite right in referring them to nature."

"Nothing *can* be more natural to me, lieutenant, than a fine ship standing on her canvas. It's an object to improve the heart and to soften the understanding."

"So I should think, ma'am," returned Wallace, a little quizzically, "judging from the effect on yourself."

This speech, unfortunately timed as it was, wrought a complete change in Rose's feelings, and she no longer wished to exchange the Swash for the Poughkeepsie. She saw that her aunt was laughed at in secret, and that was a circumstance that never failed to grate on every nerve in her system. She had been prepared to second and sustain the intended application, —she was now determined to oppose it.

"Yes, sir," resumed the unconscious relict, "and to soften the understanding. Lieutenant, did you ever cross the Capricorn?"

"No less than six times; three going and three returning, you know."

"And did Neptune come on board you, and were you shaved?"

"Every thing was done *secundum artem*, ma'am. The razor was quite an example of what are called in poetry 'thoughts too deep for tears.'"

"That must have been delightful. As for me, I'm quite a devotee of Neptune's; but I'm losing time, for no doubt your ship is all ready to pull away and carry on sail—"

"Aunt, may I say a word to you before you go any further?" put in Rose in her quiet but very controlling way.

The aunt complied, and Wallace, as soon as left alone, felt like a man who was released from a quick-sand, into which every effort to extricate himself only plunged him so much the deeper. At this moment the ship hailed, and the lieutenant took a hasty leave of Spike, motioned to the midshipman to precede him, and followed the latter into his boat. Spike saw his visitor off in person, tending the side and offering the man-ropes with his own hands.

For this civility Wallace thanked him, calling out as his boat pulled from the brig's side—"If we '*pull* away,'" accenting the "pull" in secret derision of the relict's mistake, "*you* can *pull* away; our filling the topsail being a sign for you to do the same."

"There you go, and joy go with you," muttered Spike, as he descended from the gangway. "A pretty kettle of fish would there have been cooked had I let him have his two barrels of flour."

The man-of-war's cutter was soon under the lee of the ship, where it discharged its freight, when it was immediately run up. During the whole time Wallace had been absent, Captain Mull and his officers remained on the poop, principally occupied in examining and discussing the merits of the Swash. No sooner had their officers returned, however, than an order was given to fill away, it being supposed that the Poughkeepsie had no further concern with the brigantine. As for Wallace, he ascended to the poop and made the customary report.

"It's a queer cargo to be carrying to Key West from the Atlantic coast," observed the

captain in a deliberating sort of manner, as if the circumstance excited suspicion; "yet the Mexicans can hardly be in want of any such supplies."

"Did you *see* the flour, Wallace?" inquired the first lieutenant, who was well aware of his mess-mate's indolence.

"Yes, sir, and *felt* it too. The lower hold of the brig is full of flour, and of nothing else."

"Ware round, sir—ware round and pass athwart the brig's wake," interrupted the captain. "There's plenty of room now, and I wish to pass as near that craft as we can."

This manœuvre was executed. The sloop-of war no sooner filled her maintop-sail than she drew ahead, leaving plenty of room for the brigantine to make sail on her course. Spike did not profit by this opening, however, but he sent several men aloft forward, where they appeared to be getting ready to send down the upper yards and the top-gallant-mast. No sooner was the sloop-of-war's helm put-up than that vessel passed close along the brigantine's weather side, and kept off across her stern on her course. As she did this the canvas was

fluttering aboard her, in the process of making sail, and Mull held a short discourse with Spike.

"Is anything the matter aloft?" demanded the man-of-war's man.

"Ay, ay; I've sprung my topgallant-mast, and think this a good occasion to get another up in its place."

"Shall I lend you a carpenter or two, Mr. Spike?"

"Thank'ee, sir, thank'ee, with all my heart; but we can do without them. It's an old stick and it's high time a better stood where it does. Who knows but I may be chased and feel the want of reliable spars."

Captain Mull smiled and raised his cap in the way of an adieu, when the conversation ended, the Poughkeepsie sliding off rapidly with a free wind, leaving the Swash nearly stationary. In ten minutes the two vessels were more than a mile apart; in twenty beyond the reach of shot.

Notwithstanding the natural and commonplace manner in which this separation took place, there was much distrust on board each

vessel, and a good deal of consummate management on the part of Spike. The latter knew that every foot the sloop-of-war went on her course, carried her just so far to leeward, placing his own brig, in-so-much, dead to windward of her. As the Swash's best point of sailing, relatively considered, was close-hauled, this was giving to Spike a great security against any change of purpose on the part of the vessel-of-war. Although his people were aloft, and actually sent down the topgallant-mast, it was only to send it up again, the spar being of admirable toughness, and as sound as the day it was cut.

"I don't think, Mr. Mulford," said the captain sarcastically, "that Uncle Sam's glasses are good enough to tell the difference in wood at two leagues distance, so we'll trust to the old stick a little longer. Ay, ay, let'em run off before it, we'll find another road by which to reach our port."

"The sloop-of-war is going round the south side of Cuba, Captain Spike," answered the mate, "and I have understood you to say that you intended to go by the same passage."

"A body may change his mind, and no murder. Only consider, Harry, how common it is for folks to change their minds. I *did* intend to pass between Cuba and Jamaica, but I intend it no longer. Our run from Montauk has been oncommon short, and I've time enough to spare to go to the southward of Jamaica too, if the notion takes me."

"That would greatly prolong the passage, Captain Spike—a week at least."

"What if it does—I've a week to spare; we're nine days afore our time."

"Our time for what, sir? Is there any particular time set for a vessel's going into Key West?"

"Do n't be womanish and over cur'ous, Mulford. I sail with sealed orders, and when we get well to windward of Jamaica, 't will be time enough to open them."

Spike was as good as his word. As soon as he thought the sloop-of-war was far enough to leeward, or when she was hull down, he filled away and made sail on the wind to get nearer to Porto Rico. Long ere it was dark he had lost sight of the sloop-of-war, when he altered his

course to south-westerly, which was carrying him in the direction he named, or to windward of Jamaica.

While this artifice was being practised on board the Molly Swash, the officers of the Poughkeepsie were not quite satisfied with their own mode of proceeding with the brigantine. The more they reasoned on the matter the more unlikely it seemed to them that Spike could be really carrying a cargo of flour from New York to Key West, in the expectation of disposing of it to the United States' contractors, and the more out of the way did he seem to be in running through the Mona Passage.

"His true course should have been by the Hole in the Wall, and so down along the north side of Cuba, before the wind," observed the first lieutenant. "I wonder that never struck you, Wallace; *you* who so little like trouble."

"Certainly I knew it, but we lazy people like running off before the wind, and I did not know but such were Mr. Spike's tastes," answered the "ship's gentleman." "In my judgment, the reluctance he showed to letting us have any of his flour is much the

most suspicious circumstance in the whole affair."

These two speeches were made on the poop, in the presence of the captain, but in a sort of an aside that admitted of some of the ward-room familiarity exhibited. Captain Mull was not supposed to hear what passed, though hear it he in fact did, as was seen by his own remarks, which immediately succeeded.

"I understand you to say, Mr. Wallace," observed the captain, a little drily, "that you *saw* the flour yourself?"

"I saw the flour-*barrels*, sir; and as regularly built were they as any barrels that ever were branded. But a flour-barrel *may* have contained something beside *flour*."

"Flour usually makes itself visible in the handling: were these barrels quite clean?"

"Far from it, sir. They showed flour on their staves, like any other cargo. After all, the man may have more sense than we give him credit for, and find a high market for his cargo."

Captain Mull seemed to muse, which was a hint for his juniors not to continue the con-

versation, but rather to seem to muse too. After a short pause, the captain quietly remarked, "Well, gentlemen, he will be coming down after us, I suppose, as soon as he gets his new top-gallant mast on-end, and then we can keep a bright look-out for him. We shall cruise off Cape St. Antonio for a day or two, and no doubt shall get another look at him. I should like to have one baking from his flour."

But Spike had no intention to give the Poughkeepsie the desired opportunity. As has been stated, he stood off to the southward on a wind, and completely doubled the eastern end of Jamaica, when he put his helm up, and went, with favouring wind and current, toward the northward and westward. The consequence was, that he did not fall in with the Poughkeepsie at all, which vessel was keeping a sharp look-out for him in the neighbourhood of Cape St. Antonio and the Isle of Pines, at the very moment he was running down the coast of Yucatan. Of all the large maritime countries of the world, Mexico, on the Atlantic, is that which is the most easily blockaded by a superior

naval power. By maintaining a proper force between Key West and the Havanna, and another squadron between Cape St. Antonio and Loggerhead Key, the whole country, the Bay of Honduras excepted, is shut up, as it might be in a band-box. It is true the Gulf would be left open to the Mexicans, were not squadrons kept nearer in; but, as for anything getting out into the broad Atlantic, it would be next to hopeless. The distance to be watched between the Havanna and Key West, is only about sixty miles, while that in the other direction is not much greater.

While the Swash was making the circuit of Jamaica, as described, her captain had little communication with his passengers. The misunderstanding with the relict embarrassed him as much as it embarassed her; and he was quite willing to let time mitigate her resentment. Rose would be just as much in his power a fortnight hence as she was to-day. This cessation in the captain's attentions gave the females greater liberty, and they improved it, singularly enough as it seemed to Mulford, by cultivating a strange sort of intimacy with Jack

Tier. The very day that succeeded the delicate conversation with Mrs. Budd, to a part of which Jack had been an auditor, the uncouth-looking steward's assistant was seen in close conference with the pretty Rose; the subject of their conversation being, apparently, of a most engrossing nature. From that hour Jack got to be not only a confidant, but a favourite, to Mulford's great surprise. A less inviting subject for *tête-à-têtes* and confidential dialogues, thought the young man, could not well exist: but so it was; woman's caprices are inexplicable; and not only Rose and her aunt, but even the captious and somewhat distrustful Biddy, manifested on all occasions not only friendship, but kindness and consideration for Jack.

"You quite put my nose out o' joint, you Jack Tier, with 'e lady," grumbled Josh, the steward *de jure*, if not now *de facto*, of the craft, "and I never see nuttin' like it! I s'pose you expect ten dollar, at least, from dem passenger, when we gets in. But I'd have you to know, Misser Jack, if you please, dat a steward be a steward, and he don't like

to hab trick played wid him, afore he own face."

"Poh! poh! Joshua," answered Jack good naturedly, "don't distress yourself on a consait. In the first place, you've got no nose to be put out of joint; or, if you have really a nose, it has no joint. It 's nat'ral for folks to like their own colour, and the ladies prefar me, because I 'm white."

"No so werry white as all dat, nudder," grumbled Josh. "I see great many whiter dan you. But, if dem lady like you so much as to gib you ten dollar, as I expects, when we gets in, I presumes you'll hand over half, or six dollar, of that money to your superior officer, as is law in the case."

"Do you call six the half of ten, Joshua, my scholar, eh?"

"Well, den, seven, if you like dat better. I wants just half, and just half I means to get."

"And half you shall have, maty. I only wish you would just tell where we shall be when we gets in."

"How I know, white man? Dat belong to

skipper, and better ask him. If he don't gib you lick in de chop, p'rhaps he tell you."

As Jack Tier had no taste for "licks in the chops," he did not follow Josh's advice. But his agreeing to give half of the ten dollars to the steward kept peace in the cabins. He was even so scrupulous of his word, as to hand to Josh a half eagle that very day—money he had received from Rose; saying he would trust to Providence for his own half of the expected *douceur*. This concession placed Jack Tier on high grounds with his "superior officer," and from that time the former was left to do the whole of the customary service of the ladies' cabin.

As respects the vessel, nothing worthy of notice occurred until she had passed Loggerhead Key, and was fairly launched in the Gulf of Mexico. Then, indeed, Spike took a step that greatly surprized his mate. The latter was directed to bring all his instruments, charts, etc., and place them in the Captain's state-room, where it was understood they were to remain until the brig got into port. Spike was but an indifferent navigator, while Mulford was one of

a higher order than common. So much had the former been accustomed to rely on the latter, indeed, as they approached a strange coast, that he could not possibly have taken any step that was not positively criminal, which would have given his mate more uneasiness than this.

At first, Mulford naturally enough suspected that Spike intended to push for some Mexican port, by thus blinding his eyes as to the position of the vessel. The direction steered, however, soon relieved the mate from this apprehension. From the eastern extremity of Yucatan, the Mexican coast trends to the westward, and even to the south of west, for a long distance, whereas the course steered by Spike was north-easterly. This was diverging from the enemy's coast instead of approaching it, and the circumstance greatly relieved the apprehensions of Mulford.

Nor was the sequestration of the mate's instruments the only suspicious act of Spike. He caused the brig's paint to be entirely altered, and even went so far toward disguising her, as to make some changes aloft. All this was done as the vessel passed swiftly on her

course, and every thing had been effected, apparently to the captain's satisfaction, when the cry of "land-ho!" was once more heard. The land proved to be a cluster of low, small islands, part coral, part sand, that might have been eight or ten in number, and the largest of which did not possess a surface of more than a very few acres. Many were the merest islets imaginable, and on one of the largest of the cluster rose a tall, gaunt light-house, having the customary dwelling of its keeper at its base. Nothing else was visible, the broad expanse of the blue waters of the Gulf excepted. All the land in sight would not probably have made one field of twenty acres in extent, and that seemed cut off from the rest of the world, by a broad barrier of water. It was a spot of such singular situation and accessories, that Mulford gazed at it with a burning desire to know where he was, as the brig steered through a channel between two of the islets, into a capacious and perfectly safe basin, formed by the group, and dropped her anchor in its centre.

CHAPTER V.

He sleeps; but dreams of massy gold,
And heaps of pearl. He stretched his hands,
He hears a voice—"Ill man withhold!"
A pale one near him stands.

DANA.

It was near nightfall when the Swash anchored among the low and small islets mentioned. Rose had been on deck, as the vessel approached this singular and solitary haven, watching the movements of those on board, as well as the appearance of objects on the land, with the interest her situation would be likely to awaken. She saw the light and manageable craft glide through the narrow and crooked passages that led into the port, the process of anchoring, and the scene of tranquil solitude that succeeded; each following the other as by a law of nature. The light-house next attracted her attention, and, as soon as the sun disappeared, her eyes were fastened on the lantern,

in expectation of beholding the watchful and warning fires gleaming there, to give the mariner notice of the position of the dangers that surrounded the place. Minute went by after minute, however, and the customary illumination seemed to be forgotten.

"Why is not the light shining?" Rose asked of Mulford, as the young man came near her, after having discharged his duty in helping to moor the vessel, and in clearing the decks. "All the light-houses we have passed, and they have been fifty, have shown bright lights at this hour, but this."

"I cannot explain it; nor have I the smallest notion where we are. I have been aloft, and there was nothing in sight but this cluster of low islets, far or near. I did fancy, for a moment, I saw a speck like a distant sail, off here to the northward and eastward, but I rather think it was a gull, or some other sea-bird glancing upward on the wing. I mentioned it to the captain when I came down, and he appeared to believe it a mistake. I have watched that light-house closely, too, ever since we came in, and I have not seen the

smallest sign of life about it. It is altogether an extraordinary place!"

"One suited to acts of villany, I fear, Harry!"

"Of that we shall be better judges to-morrow. You, at least, have one vigilant friend, who will die sooner than harm shall come to you. I believe Spike to be thoroughly unprincipled; still he knows he can go so far and no farther, and has a wholesome dread of the law. But the circumstance that there should be such a port as this, with a regular light-house, and no person near the last, is so much out of the common way, that I do not know what to make of it."

"Perhaps the light-house keeper is afraid to show himself, in the presence of the Swash?"

"That can hardly be, for vessels must often enter the port, if port it can be called. But Spike is as much concerned at the circumstance that the lamps are not lighted, as any of us can be. Look, he is about to visit the building in the boat, accompanied by two of his oldest sea-dogs."

"Why might we not raise the anchor, and

sail out of this place, leaving Spike ashore," suggested Rose, with more decision and spirit than discretion.

"Simply because the act would be piracy, even if I could get the rest of the people to obey my orders, as certainly I could not. No Rose, you, and your aunt, and Biddy, however, might land at these buildings, and refuse to return, Spike having no authority over his passengers."

"Still he would have the *power* to make us come back to his brig. Look, he has left the vessel's side, and is going directly toward the light-house."

Mulford made no immediate answer, but remained at Rose's side, watching the movements of the captain. The last pulled directly to the islet with the buildings, a distance of only a few hundred feet, the light-house being constructed on a rocky island that was nearly in the centre of the cluster, most probably with a view to protect it from the ravages of the waves. The fact, however, proved, as Mulford did not fail to suggest to his companion, that the beacon had been erected less to guide ves-

sels *into* the haven, than to warn mariners at a distance, of the position of the whole group.

In less than five minutes after he had landed, Spike himself was seen in the lantern, in the act of lighting its lamps. In a very short time the place was in a brilliant blaze, reflectors and all the other parts of the machinery of the place performing their duties as regularly as if tended by the usual keeper. Soon after Spike returned on board, and the anchor-watch was set. Then everybody sought the rest that it was customary to take at that hour.

Mulford was on deck with the appearance of the sun; but he found that Spike had preceded him, had gone ashore again, had extinguished the lamps, and was coming along side of the brig on his return. A minute later the captain came over the side.

"You were right about your sail last night, a'ter all, Mr. Mulford," said Spike on coming aft. "There she is, sure enough; and we shall have her along side to strike cargo out and in, by the time the people have got their breakfasts."

As Spike pointed toward the light-house

while speaking, the mate changed his position a little, and saw that a schooner was coming down toward the islets before the wind. Mulford now began to understand the motives of the captain's proceedings, though a good deal yet remained veiled in mystery. He could not tell where the brig was, nor did he know precisely why so many expedients were adopted to conceal the transfer of a cargo as simple as that of flour. But he who was in the secret left but little time for reflection; for swallowing a hasty breakfast on deck, he issued orders enough to his mate to give him quite as much duty as he could perform, when he again entered the yawl, and pulled toward the stranger.

Rose soon appeared on deck, and she naturally began to question Harry concerning their position and prospects. He was confessing his ignorance, as well as lamenting it, when his companion's sweet face suddenly flushed. She advanced a step eagerly towards the open window of Spike's state-room, then compressed her full, rich underlip with the ivory of her upper teeth, and stood a single instant, a beautiful statue of irresolution instigated by spirit.

The last quality prevailed; and Mulford was really startled when he saw Rose advance quite to the window, thrust in an arm, and turn toward him with his own sextant in her hand. During the course of the passage out, the young man had taught Rose to assist him in observing the longitude; and she was now ready to repeat the practice. Not a moment was lost in executing her intention. Sights were had, and the instrument was returned to its place without attracting the attention of the men, who were all busy in getting up purchases, and in making the other necessary dispositions for discharging the flour. The observations answered the purpose, though somewhat imperfectly made. Mulford had a tolerable notion of their latitude, having kept the brig's run in his head since quitting Yucatan; and he now found that their longitude was about 83° west from Greenwich. After ascertaining this fact, a glance at the open chart, which lay on Spike's desk, satisfied him that the vessel was anchored within the group of the Dry Tortugas, or at the western termination of the well-known formidable, and extensive Florida Reef. He

had never been in that part of the world before, but he had heard enough in sea-gossip, and had read enough in books, to be at once apprized of the true character of their situation. The islets were American; the lighthouse was American; and the haven in which the Swash lay was the very spot in the contemplation of government for an outer man-of-war harbour, where fleets might rendezvous in the future wars of that portion of the world. He now saw plainly enough the signs of the existence of a vast reef, a short distance to the southward of the vessel, that formed a species of sea-wall, or mole, to protect the port against the waves of the gulf, in that direction. This reef he knew to be miles in width.

There was little time for speculation, Spike soon bringing the strange schooner directly alongside of the brig. The two vessels immediately became a scene of activity, one discharging and the other receiving the flour as fast it could be struck out of the hold of the Swash and lowered upon the deck of the schooner. Mulford, however, had practised a little artifice as the stranger entered the haven,

which drew down upon him an anathema or two from Spike, as soon as they were alone. The mate had set the brig's ensign, and this compelled the stranger to be markedly rude, or to answer the compliment; accordingly he had shown the ancient flag of Spain. For thus extorting a national symbol from the schooner, the mate was sharply rebuked at a suitable moment, though nothing could have been more forbearing than the deportment of his commander when they first met.

When Spike returned to his own vessel, he was accompanied by a dark-looking, well-dressed, and decidedly gentleman-like personage, whom he addressed indifferently in his very imperfect Spanish as Don Wan (Don Juan, or John,) or Señor Montefalderon. By the latter appellation he even saw fit to introduce the very respectable-looking stranger to his mate. The stranger spoke English well, though with an accent.

"Don Wan has taken all the flour, Mr. Mulford, and intends shoving it over into Cuba, without troubling the custom-house, I

believe; but that is not a matter to give *us* any concern, you know."

The wink, and the knowing look by which this speech wns accompanied, seemed particularly disagreeable to Don Juan, who now paid his compliments to Rose with no little surprise betrayed in his countenance, but with the ease and reserve of a gentleman. Mulford thought it strange that a smuggler of flour should be so polished a personage, though his duty did not admit of his bestowing much attention to the little trifling of the interview that succeeded.

For about an hour the work went steadily and rapidly on. During that time Mulford was several times on board the schooner, as indeed was Josh, Jack Tier, and others belonging to the Swash. The Spanish vessel was Baltimore, or clipper built, with a trunk-cabin, and had every appearance of sailing fast. Mulford was struck with her model, and, while on board of her, he passed both forward and aft to examine it. This was so natural in a seamen, that Spike, while he noted the proceeding, took it in good part; he even called out to his mate from his own quarter-deck to admire this

or that point in the schooner's construction. As is customary with the vessels of southern nations, this stranger was full of men, but they continued at their work, some half dozen of brawny negroes among them, shouting their songs as they swayed at the falls, no one appearing to manifest jealousy or concern. At length Tier came near the mate, and said,

"Uncle Sam will not be pleased when he hears the reason that the keeper is not in his light-house."

"And what is that reason, Jack? If you know it, tell it to me."

"Go aft, and look down the companion-way, maty, and see it for yourself."

Mulford did go aft, and he made an occasion to look down into the schooner's cabin, where he caught a glimpse of the persons of a man and a boy, whom he at once supposed had been taken from the lighthouse. This one fact of itself doubled his distrust of the character of Spike's proceeding. There was no sufficient apparent reason why a mere smuggler should care about the presence of an individual more or less in a foreign port. Every thing that

had occurred looked like pre-concert between the brig and the schooner; and the mate was just beginning to entertain the strongest distrust that their vessel was holding treasonable communication with the enemy, when an accident removed all doubt on the subject, from his own mind at least. Spike had once or twice given his opinion that the weather was treacherous, and urged the people of both crafts to extraordinary exertions, in order that the vessels might get clear of each other as soon as possible. This appeal had set various expedients in motion to second the more regular work of the purchases. Among other things, planks had been laid from one vessel to the other, and barrels were rolled along with very little attention to the speed or the direction. Several had fallen on the schooner's deck with rude shocks, but no damage was done until one, of which the hoops had not been properly secured, met with a fall, and burst nearly at Mulford's feet. It was at the precise moment when the mate was returning, from taking his glance into the cabin, toward the side of the Swash. A white cloud arose, and half a dozen

of the schooner's people sprang for buckets, kids, or dishes, in order to secure enough of the contents of a broken barrel to furnish them with a meal. At first nothing was visible but the white cloud that succeeded the fall, and the scrambling sailors in its midst. No sooner, however, had the air got to be a little clear, than Mulford saw an object lying in the centre of the wreck, that he at once recognized for a keg of gunpowder! The captain of the schooner seized this keg, gave a knowing look at Mulford, and disappeared in the hold of his own vessel, carrying with him, what was out of all question, a most material part of the true cargo of the Swash.

At the moment when the flour-barrel burst, Spike was below in close conference with his Spanish or Mexican guest; and the wreck being so soon cleared away, it is probable that he never heard of the accident. As for the two crews, they laughed a little among themselves at the revelation which had been made, as well as at the manner; but to old sea-dogs like them, it was a matter of very little moment whether the cargo was in reality flour or gun-

powder. In a few minutes the affair seemed to be forgotten. In the course of another hour the Swash was light, having nothing in her but some pig-lead which she used for ballast, while the schooner was loaded to her hatches, and full. Spike now sent a boat, with orders to drop a kedge about a hundred yards from the place where his own brig lay. The schooner warped up to this kedge, and dropped an anchor of her own, leaving a very short range of cable out, it being a flat calm. Ordinarily, the trades prevail at the Dry Tortugas, and all along the Florida Reef. Sometimes, indeed, this breeze sweeps across the whole width of the Gulf of Mexico, blowing home, as it is called—reaching even to the coast of Texas. It is subject, however, to occasional interruptions everywhere, varying many points in its direction, and occasionally ceasing entirely. The latter was the condition of the weather about noon on this day, or when the schooner hauled off from the brig, and was secured at her own anchor.

"Mr. Mulford," said Spike, "I do not like the state of the atmosphere. D'ye see that

fiery streak along the western horizon?—well, sir, as the sun gets nearer to that streak, there'll be trouble, or I'm no judge of weather."

"You surely do not imagine, Captain Spike, that the sun will be any nearer to that fiery streak, as you call it, when he is about to set, than he is at this moment?" answered the mate, smiling.

"I'm sure of one thing, young man, and that is, that old heads are better than young ones. What a man has once seen, he may expect to see again, if the same leading signs offer. Man the boat, sir, and carry out the kedge, which is still in it, and lay it off here, about three p'ints on our larboard bow."

Mulford had a profound respect for Spike's seamanship, whatever he might think of his principles: the order was consequently obeyed. The mate was then directed to send down various articles out of the top, and to get the top-gallant and royal yards on deck. Spike carried his precautions so far as to have the mainsail lowered, it ordinarily brailing at that season of the year, with a standing gaff. With

this disposition completed, the captain seemed more at his ease, and went below to join Señor Montefalderon in a *siesta*. The Mexican, for such in truth was the national character of the owner of the schooner, had preceded him in this indulgence; and most of the people of the brig having laid themselves down to sleep under the heat of the hour, Mulford soon enjoyed another favourable opportunity for a private conference with Rose.

"Harry," commenced the latter, as soon as they were alone, "I have much to tell you. While you have been absent I have overheard a conversation between this Spanish gentleman and Spike, that shows the last is in treaty with the other for the sale of the brig. Spike extolled his vessel to the skies, while Don Wan, as he calls him, complains that the brig is old, and cannot last long; to which Spike answered, 'To be sure she is old, Señor Montefalderon, but she will last as long as *your war*, and under a bold captain might be made to return her cost a hundred-fold!' What war can he mean, and to what does such a discourse tend?"

"The war alludes to the war now existing between America and Mexico, and the money to be made is to be plundered at sea, from our own merchant-vessels. If Don Juan Montefalderon is really in treaty for the purchase of the brig, it is to convert her into a Mexican cruizer, either public or private."

"But this would be treason on the part of Spike!"

"Not more so than supplying the enemy with gunpowder, as he has just been doing. I have ascertained the reason he was so unwilling to be overhauled by the revenue steamer, as well as the reason why the revenue steamer wished so earnestly to overhaul us. Each barrel of flour contains another of gunpowder, and that has been sold to this Señor Montefalderon, who is doubtless an officer of the Mexican government, and no smuggler."

"He has been at New York this very summer, I know," continued Rose, "for he spoke of his visit, and made such other remarks, as leaves no doubt that Spike expected to find him here, on this very day of the month. He also paid Spike a large sum of money in doub-

loons, and took back the bag to his schooner, when he had done so, after showing the captain enough was left to pay for the brig, could they only agree on the terms of their bargain."

"Ay, ay; it is all plain enough now, Spike has determined on a desperate push for fortune, and foreseeing it might not soon be in his power to return to New York, in safety, he has included his designs on you and your fortune, in the plot."

"My fortune! the trifle I possess can scarcely be called a fortune, Harry!"

"It would be a fortune to Spike, Rose, and I shall be honest enough to own it would be a fortune to me. I say this frankly, for I do believe you think too well of me to suppose that I seek you for any other reason than the ardent love I bear your person and character; but a fact is not to be denied because it may lead certain persons to distrust our motives. Spike is poor, like myself, and the brig is not only getting to be very old, but she has been losing money for the last twelve months."

Mulford and Rose now conversed long and confidentially, on their situation and prospects.

The mate neither magnified nor concealed the dangers of both; but freely pointed out the risk to himself, in being on board a vessel that was aiding and comforting the enemy. It was determined between them that both would quit the brig the moment an opportunity offered, and the mate even went so far as to propose an attempt to escape in one of the boats, although he might incur the hazard of a double accusation, those of mutiny and larceny, for making the experiment. Unfortunately, neither Rose, nor her aunt, nor Biddy, nor Jack Tier had seen the barrel of powder, and neither could testify as to the true character of Spike's connexion with the schooner. It was manifestly necessary, therefore, independently of the risks that might be run by "bearding the lion in his den," to proceed with great intelligence and caution.

This dialogue between Harry and Rose occurred just after the turn in the day, and it lasted fully an hour. Each had been too much interested to observe the heavens, but, as they were on the point of separating, Rose pointed out to her companion the unusual and most

menacing aspect of the sky in the western horizon. It appeared as if a fiery heat was glowing there, behind a curtain of black vapour; and what rendered it more remarkable, was the circumstance that an extraordinary degree of placidity prevailed in all other parts of the heavens. Mulford scarce knew what to make of it; his experience not going so far as to enable him to explain the novel and alarming appearance. He stepped on a gun and gazed around him for a moment. There lay the schooner, without a being visible on board of her, and there stood the light-house, gloomy in its desertion and solitude. The birds alone seemed to be alive and conscious of what was approaching. They were all on the wing, wheeling wildly in the air, and screaming discordantly, as belonged to their habits. The young man leaped off the gun, gave a loud call to Spike, at the companion-way, and sprang forward to call all hands.

One minute only was lost, when every seaman on board the Swash, from the captain to Jack Tier, was on deck. Mulford met Spike at the cabin door, and pointed toward the fiery

column that was booming down upon the anchorage, with a velocity and direction that would now admit of no misinterpretation. For one instant that sturdy old seaman stood aghast; gazing at the enemy as one conscious of his impotency might have been supposed to quail before an assault that he foresaw must prove irresistible. Then his native spirit, and most of all the effects of training, began to show themselves in him, and he became at once, not only the man again, but the resolute, practised and ready commander.

"Come aft to the spring, men—" he shouted "clap on the spring, Mr. Mulford, and bring the brig head to wind."

This order was obeyed as seamen best obey, in cases of sudden and extreme emergency; or with intelligence, aptitude, and power. The brig had swung nearly round, in the desired direction, when the tornado struck her. It will be difficult, we do not know but it is impossible, to give a clear and accurate account of what followed. As most of our readers have doubtless felt how great is the power of the wind whiffling and pressing different ways, in sudden

and passing gusts, they have only to imagine this power increased many, many fold, and the baffling of the currents made furious, as it might be, by meeting with resistance, to form some notion of the appalling strength and frightful inconstancy with which it blew for about a minute.

Notwithstanding the circumstances of Spike's precaution had greatly lessened the danger, every man on the deck of the Swash believed the brig was gone when the gust struck her. Over she went, in fact, until the water came pouring in above her half-ports, like so many little cascades, and spouting up through her scupper-holes, resembling the blowing of young whales. It was the whiffling energy of the tornado, that alone saved her. As if disappointed in not destroying its intended victim at one swoop, the tornado "let up" in its pressure, like a dexterous wrestler, making a fresh and desperate effort to overturn the vessel, by a slight variation in its course. That change saved the Swash. She righted, and even rolled in the other direction, or what may be called to windward, with her decks full of water. For

a minute longer, these baffling, changing gusts continued, each causing the brig to bow like a reed to their power, one lifting as another pressed her down, and then the weight, or the more dangerous part of the tornado was passed, though it continued to blow heavily, always in whiffling blasts, several minutes longer.

During the weight of the gust, no one had leisure, or indeed inclination to look to aught beyond its effect on the brig. Had one been otherwise disposed, the attempt would have been useless, for the wind had filled the air with spray, and near the islets even with sand. The lurid but fiery tinge, too, interposed a veil that no human eye could penetrate. As the tornado passed onward, however, and the wind lulled, the air again became clear, and in five minutes after the moment when the Swash lay nearly on her side, with her lower yard-arm actually within a few feet of the water, all was still and placid around her, as one is accustomed to see the ocean in a calm, of a summer's afternoon. Then it was that those who had been in such extreme jeopardy could breathe freely

and look about them. On board the Swash, all was well—not a rope-yarn had parted, or an eye-bolt drawn. The timely precautions of Spike had saved his brig, and great was his joy thereat.

In the midst of the infernal din of the tornado screams had ascended from the cabin, and the instant he could quit the deck with propriety Mulford sprang below, in order to ascertain their cause. He apprehended that some of the females had been driven to leeward when the brig went over, and that some of the luggage or furniture had fallen on them. In the main cabin, the mate found Señor Montefalderon just quitting his berth, composed, gentleman-like, and collected. Josh was braced in a corner nearly grey with fear, while Jack Tier still lay on the cabin floor, at the last point to which he had rolled. One word sufficed to let Don Juan know that the gust had passed, and the brig was safe, when Mulford tapped at the door of the inner cabin. Rose appeared, pale, but calm and unhurt.

"Is any one injured?" asked the young man, his mind relieved at once, as soon as he saw

that she who most occupied his thoughts was safe; "we heard screams from this cabin."

"My aunt and Biddy have been frightened," answered Rose, "but neither has been hurt. Oh, Harry, what terrible thing has happened to us? I heard the roaring of—"

"'T was a tornado," interrupted Mulford eagerly—"but 'tis over. 'Twas one of those sudden and tremendous gusts that sometimes occur within the tropics, in which the danger is usually in the first shock. If no one is injured in this cabin, no one is injured at all."

"Oh, Mr. Mulford—dear Mr. Mulford!" exclaimed the relict from the corner into which she had been followed and jammed by Biddy, "Oh, Mr. Mulford, are we foundered or not?"

"Heaven be praised, not, my dear ma'am, though we came nearer to it than I ever was before."

"Are we cap-asided?"

"Nor that, Mrs. Budd; the brig is as upright as a church."

"Upright!" repeated Biddy, in her customary accent—"is it as a church? Sure,

then, Mr. Mate, 'tis a Presbyterian church that you mane, and that is always totterin'."

"Catholic or Dutch—no church in York is more completely up and down, than the brig at this moment."

"Get off of me—get off of me, Biddy, and let me rise," said the widow, with dignity. "The danger is over I see, and, as we return our thanks for it, we have the consolation of knowing that we have done our duty. It is incumbent on all, at such moments, to be at their posts, and to set examples of decision and prudence."

As Mulford saw all was well in the cabin, he hastened on deck, followed by Señor Montefalderon. Just as they emerged from the companion-way, Spike was hailing the forecastle.

"Forecastle, there," he cried, standing on the trunk himself as he did so, and moving from side to side, as if to catch a glimpse of some object ahead.

"Sir," came back from an old salt, who was coiling up rigging in that seat of seamanship.

"Where away is the schooner? She ought

to be dead ahead of us, as we tend now—but blast me if I can see as much as her mast-heads."

At this suggestion, a dozen men sprang upon guns or other objects, to look for the vessel in question. The old salt forward, however, had much the best chance, for he stepped on the heel of the bowsprit and walked as far out as the knight-heads, to command the whole view ahead of the brig. There he stood half a minute, looking first on one side of the head-gear, then the other, when he gave his trousers a hitch, put a fresh quid in his mouth, and called out in a voice almost as hoarse as the tempest, that had just gone by,—

"The schooner has gone down at her anchor, sir! There's her buoy watching still, as if nothing had happened; but as for the craft itself, there's not so much as a bloody yard-arm, or mast-head of her to be seen!"

This news produced a sensation in the brig at once, as may be supposed. Even Señor Montefalderon, a quiet, gentleman-like person, altogether superior in deportment to the bustle and fuss that usually marks the manners of

persons in trade, was disturbed; for to him the blow was heavy indeed. Whether he were acting for himself, or was an agent of the Mexican Government, the loss was much the same.

"Tom is right enough," put in Spike, rather coolly for the circumstances—"that there schooner of your'n has foundered, Don Wan, as any one can see. She must have capsized and filled, for I obsarved they had left the hatches off, meaning, no doubt, to make an end of the storage, as soon as they had done sleeping."

"And what has become of all her men, Don Esteban?" for so the Mexican politely called his companion. "Have all my poor countrymen perished in this disaster?"

"I fear they have, Don Wan; for I see no head, as of any one swimming. The vessel lay so near that island next to it, that a poor swimmer would have no difficulty in reaching the place; but there is no living thing to be seen. But man the boat, men; we will go to the spot, Señor, and examine for ourselves."

There were two boats in the water, and

alongside of the brig. One was the Swash's yawl, a small but convenient craft, while the other was much larger, fitted with a sail, and had all the appearance of having been built to withstand breezes and seas. Mulford felt perfectly satisfied, the moment he saw this boat, which had come into the haven in tow of the schooner, that it had been originally in the service of the light-house keeper. As there was a very general desire among those on the quarter-deck to go to the assistance of the schooner, Spike ordered both boats to be manned, jumping into the yawl himself, accompanied by Don Juan Montefalderon, and telling Mulford to follow with the larger craft, bringing with him as many of the females as might choose to accompany him. As Mrs. Budd thought it incumbent on her to be active in such a scene, all did go, including Biddy, though with great reluctance on the part of Rose.

With the buoy for a guide, Spike had no difficulty in finding the spot where the schooner lay. She had scarcely shifted her berth in the least, there having been no time for her even

to swing to the gust, but she had probably capsized at the first blast, filled, and gone down instantly. The water was nearly as clear as the calm, mild atmosphere of the tropics; and it was almost as easy to discern the vessel, and all her hamper, as if she lay on a beach. She had gone down as she filled, on her side, and still continued in that position. As the water was little more than three fathoms deep, the upper side was submerged but a few inches, and her yard-arms would have been out of the water, but for the circumstance that the yards had canted under the pressure.

At first, no sign was seen of any of those who had been on board this ill-fated schooner when she went down. It was known that twenty-one souls were in her, including the man and the boy who had belonged to the light-house. As the boat moved slowly over this sad ruin, however, a horrible and startling spectacle came in view. Two bodies were seen, within a few feet of the surface of the water, one grasped in the arms of the other, in the gripe of despair. The man held in the grasp, was kept beneath the water solely by the

death-lock of his companion, who was himself held where he floated, by the circumstance that one of his feet was entangled in a rope. The struggle could not have been long over, for the two bodies were slowly settling toward the bottom when first seen. It is probable that both these men had more than once risen to the surface in their dreadful struggle. Spike seized a boat-hook, and made an effort to catch the clothes of the nearest body, but ineffectually, both sinking to the sands beneath, lifeless, and without motion. There being no sharks in sight, Mulford volunteered to dive and fasten a line to one of these unfortunate men, who Don Juan declared at once was the schooner's captain. Some little time was lost in procuring a lead-line from the brig, when the lead was dropped alongside of the drowned. Provided with another piece of the same sort of line, which had a small running bowline around that which was fastened to the lead, the mate made his plunge, and went down with great vigour of arm. It required resolution and steadiness to descend so far into salt water; but Harry succeeded,

and rose with the bodies, which came up with the slightest impulse. All were immediately got into the boat, and away the latter went toward the light-house, which was nearer and more easy of access than the brig.

It is probable that one of these unfortunate men might have been revived under judicious treatment; but he was not fated to receive it. Spike, who knew nothing of such matters, undertook to direct every thing, and instead of having recourse to warmth and gentle treatment, he ordered the bodies to be rolled on a cask, suspended them by the heels, and resorted to a sort of practice that might have destroyed well men, instead of resuscitating those in whom the vital spark was dormant, if not actually extinct.

Two hours later, Rose, seated in her own cabin, unavoidably overheard the following dialogue, which passed in English, a language that Señor Montefalderon spoke perfectly well, as has been said.

"Well, Señor," said Spike, "I hope this little accident will not prevent our final trade. You will want the brig now, to take this schooner's place."

"And how am I to pay you for the brig, Señor Spike, even if I buy her?"

"I'll ventur' to guess there is plenty of money in Mexico. Though they do say the government is so backward about paying, I have always found you punctual, and am not afraid to put faith in you ag'in."

"But I have no longer any money to pay you half in hand, as I did for the powder, when last in New York."

"The bag was pretty well lined with doubloons when I saw it last, Señor."

"And do you know where that bag is; and where there is another that holds the same sum?"

Spike started, and he mused in silence some little time, ere he again spoke.

"I had forgotten," he at length answered. "The gold must have all gone down in the schooner, along with the powder!"

"And the poor men!"

"Why, as for the men, Señor, more may be had for the asking; but powder and doubloons will be hard to find, when most wanted. Then the men were *poor* men, accordin' to my idees

of what an able seaman should be, or they never would have let their schooner turn turtle with them as she did."

"We will talk of the money, Don Esteban, if you please," said the Mexican, with reserve.

"With all my heart, Don Wan—nothing is more agreeable to me than money. How many of them doubloons shall fall to my share if I raise the schooner, and put you in possession of your craft again?"

"Can that be done, Señor?" demanded Don Juan earnestly.

"A seaman can do almost anything, in that way, Don Wan, if you will give him time and means. For one-half the doubloons I can find in the wreck, the job shall be done."

"You can have them," answered Don Juan, quietly, a good deal surprised that Spike should deem it necessary to offer him any part of the sum he might find. "As for the powder, I suppose *that* is lost to my country."

"Not at all, Don Wan. The flour is well packed around it, and I don't expect it would take any harm in a month. I shall not only turn over the flour to you, just as if nothing had

happened, but I shall put four first rate hands aboard your schooner, who will take her into port for you, with a good deal more sartainty than forty of the men you had. My mate is a prime navigator."

This concluded the bargain, every word of which was heard by Rose, and every word of which she did not fail to communicate to Mulford, the moment there was an opportunity. The young man heard it with great interest, telling Rose that he should do all he could to assist in raising the schooner, in the hope that something might turn up to enable him to escape in her, taking off Rose and her aunt. As for his carrying her into a Mexican port, let them trust him for that! Agreeably to the arrangement, orders were given that afternoon to commence the necessary preparations for the work, and considerable progress was made in them by the time the Swash's people were ordered to knock off work for the night.

After the sun had set the reaction in the currents again commenced, and it blew for a few hours heavily, during the night. Towards morning, however, it moderated, and when

the sun re-appeared it scarcely ever diffused its rays over a more peaceful or quiet day. Spike caused all hands to be called, and immediately set about the important business he had before him.

In order that the vessel might be as free as possible, Jack Tier was directed to skull the females ashore in the brig's yawl; Señor Montefalderon, a man of polished manners, as we maintain is very apt to be the case with Mexican gentlemen, whatever may be the opinion of this good republic on the subject, just at this moment, asked permission to be of the party. Mulford found an opportunity to beg Rose, if they landed at the light, to reconnoitre the place well, with a view to ascertain what facilities it could afford in an attempt to escape. They did land at the light, and glad enough were Mrs. Budd, Rose, and Biddy, to place their feet on *terra firma* after so long a confinement to the narrow limits of a vessel.

"Well," said Jack Tier, as they walked up to the spot where the building stood, "this is a rum place for a light'us, Miss Rose, and I

don't wonder the keeper and his messmates has cleared out."

"I am very sorry to say," observed Señor Montefalderon, whose countenance expressed the concern he really felt, "that the keeper and his only companion, a boy, were on board the schooner, and have perished in her, in common with so many of my poor countrymen. There are the graves of two whom we buried here last evening, after vain efforts to restore them to life!'

"What a dreadful catastrophe it has been, Señor," said Rose, whose sweet countenance eloquently expressed the horror and regret she so naturally felt—"Twenty fellows beings hurried into eternity without even an instant for prayer."

"You feel for them, Señorita—it is natural *you* should, and it is natural that I, their countryman and leader, should feel for them, also. I do not know what God has in reserve for my unfortunate country! We may have cruel and unscrupulous men among us, Señorita, but we have thousands who are just, and brave, and honourable."

"So Mr. Mulford tells me, Señor, and he has been much in your ports, on the west coast."

"I like that young man, and wonder not a little at his and your situation in this brig,—" rejoined the Mexican, dropping his voice so as not to be heard by their companions, as they walked a little ahead of Mrs. Budd and Biddy. "The Señor Spike is scarcely worthy to be *his* commander or *your* guardian."

"Yet you find him worthy of your intercourse and trust, Don Juan?"

The Mexican shrugged his shoulders, and smiled equivocally; still, in a melancholy manner. It would seem he did not deem it wise to push this branch of the subject further, since he turned to another.

"I like the Señor Mulford," he resumed, "for his general deportment and principles, so far as I can judge of him on so short an acquaintance."

"Excuse me, Señor," interrupted Rose, hurriedly—"but you never saw *him* until you met him here?"

"Never—I understand you, Señorita, and

can do full justice to the young man's character. I am willing to think he did not know the errand of his vessel, or I should not have seen him now. But what I most like him for is this: Last night, during the gale, he and I walked the deck together for an hour. We talked of Mexico, and of this war, so unfortunate for my country already, and which may become still more so, when he uttered this noble sentiment—'My country is more powerful than yours, Señor Montefalderon,' he said, 'and in this it has been more favoured by God. You have suffered from ambitious rulers, and from military rule, while we have been advancing under the arts of peace, favoured by a most beneficent Providence. As for this war, I know but little about it, though I dare say the Mexican government may have been wrong in some things that it might have controlled and some that it might not—but let right be where it will, I am sorry to see a nation that has taken so firm a stand in favour of popular government, pressed upon so hard by another that is supposed to be the great support of such principles. America and Mexico are

neighbours, and ought to be friends, and while I do not, cannot blame my own country for pursuing the war with vigour, nothing would please me more than to hear peace proclaimed.' "

"That is just like Harry Mulford," said Rose, thoughtfully, as soon as her companion ceased to speak. "I do wish, Señor, that there could be no use for this powder, that is now buried in the sea."

Don Juan Montefalderon smiled, and seemed a little surprised that the fair, young thing at his side should have known of the treacherous contents of the flour-barrels. No doubt he found it inexplicable, that persons like Rose and Mulford should, seemingly, be united with one like Spike; but he was too well bred, and, indeed, too effectually mystified, to push the subject further than might be discreet.

By this time they were near the entrance of the light-house, into which the whole party entered, in a sort of mute awe at its silence and solitude. At Señor Montefalderon's invitation, they ascended to the lantern, whence they could command a wide and fair view of the

surrounding waters. The reef was much more apparent from that elevation than from below; and Rose could see that numbers of its rocks were bare, while on other parts of it there was the appearance of many feet of water. Rose gazed at it, with longing eyes, for, from a few remarks that had fallen from Mulford, she suspected he had hopes of escaping among its channels and coral.

As they descended and walked through the buildings, Rose also took good heed of the supplies the place afforded. There were flour, and beef, and pork; and many other of the common articles of food, as well as water in a cistern, that caught it as it flowed from the roof of the dwelling. Water was also to be found in casks—nothing like a spring or a well existing among those islets. All these things Rose noted, putting them aside in her memory for ready reference hereafter.

In the meantime the mariners were not idle. Spike moved his brig, and moored her, head and stern, alongside of the wreck, before the people got their breakfasts. As soon as that meal was ended, both captain and mate set

about their duty in earnest. Mulford carried out an anchor on the offside of the Swash, and dropped it at a distance of about eighty fathoms from the vessel's beam. Purchases were brought from both mast-heads of the brig to the chain of this anchor, and were hove upon till the vessel was given a heel of more than a streak, and the cable was tolerably taut. Other purchases were got up opposite, and overhauled down, in readiness to take hold of the schooner's masts. The anchor of the schooner was weighed by its buoy-rope, and the chain, after being rove through the upper or opposite hawse-hole, brought in on board the Swash. Another chain was dropped astern, in such a way, that when the schooner came upright, it would be sure to pass beneath her keel, some six or eight feet from the rudder. Slings were then sunk over the mast-heads, and the purchases were hooked on. Hours were consumed in these preliminary labours, and the people went to dinner as soon as they were completed.

When the men had dined, Spike brought one of his purchases to the windlass, and the

other to the capstan, though not until each was bowsed taut by hand; a few minutes having brought the strain so far on everything as to enable a seaman, like Spike, to form some judgment of the likelihood that his preventers and purchases would stand. Some changes were found necessary to equalize the strain, but, on the whole, the captain was satisfied with his work, and the crew were soon ordered to "heave-away; the windlass best."

In the course of half an hour the hull of the vessel, which lay on its bilge, began to turn on its keel, and the heads of the spars to rise above the water. This was the easiest part of the process, all that was required of the purchases being to turn over a mass which rested on the sands of the bay. Aided by the long levers afforded by the spars, the work advanced so rapidly that, in just one hour's time after his people had begun to heave, Spike had the pleasure to see the schooner standing upright, alongside of his own brig, though still sunk to the bottom. The wreck was secured in this position, by means of guys and preventers, in order that it might not again cant, when the

order was issued to hook on the slings that were to raise it to the surface. These slings were the chains of the schooner, one of which went under her keel, while for the other the captain trusted to the strength of the two hawse-holes, having passed the cable out of one and in at the other, in a way to serve his purposes, as has just been stated.

When all was ready, Spike mustered his crew, and made a speech. He told the men that he was about a job that was out of the usual line of their duty, and that he knew they had a right to expect extra pay for such extra work. The schooner contained money, and his object was to get at it. If he succeeded, their reward would be a doubloon a man, which would be earning more than a month's wages by twenty-four hours' work. This was enough. The men wanted to hear no more; but they cheered their commander, and set about their task in the happiest disposition possible.

The reader will understand that the object to be first achieved, was to raise a vessel, with a hold filled with flour and gunpowder, from off the bottom of the bay to its surface. As she

stood, the deck of this vessel was about six feet under water, and every one will understand that her weight, so long as it was submerged in a fluid as dense as that of the sea, would be much more manageable than if suspended in air. The barrels, for instance, were not much heavier than the water they displaced, and the wood-work of the vessel itself was, on the whole, positively lighter than the element in which it had sunk. As for the water in the hold, that was of the same weight as the water on the outside of the craft, and there had not been much to carry the schooner down, beside her iron, the spars that were out of the water, and her ballast. This last, some ten or twelve tons in weight, was in fact the principal difficulty, and alone induced Spike to have any doubts about his eventual success. There was no foreseeing the result until he had made a trial, however, and the order was again given to "heave away."

To the infinite satisfaction of the Swash's crew, the weight was found quite manageable, so long as the hull remained beneath the water. Mulford, with three or four assistants, was kept

on board the schooner lightening her, by getting the other anchor off her bows, and throwing the different objects overboard, or on the decks of the brig. By the time the bulwarks reached the surface, as much was gained in this way as was lost by having so much of the lighter wood-work rise above the water. As a matter of course, however, the weight increased as the vessel rose, and more especially as the lower portion of the spars, the bowsprit, boom, &c., from being buoyant assistants, became so much dead weight to be lifted.

Spike kept a watchful eye on his spars, and the extra supports he had given them. He was moving, the whole time, from point to point, feeling shrouds and back-stays, and preventers, in order to ascertain the degree of strain on each, or examining how the purchases stood. As for the crew, they cheered at their toil, incessantly, passing from capstan bars to the handspikes, and *vice versâ*. They, too, felt that their task was increasing in resistance as it advanced, and now found it more difficult to gain an inch than it had been at first to gain a foot. They seemed, indeed, to be heaving

their own vessel, out, instead of heaving the other craft up, and it was not long before they heard the Swash heeling over toward the wreck several streaks. The strain, moreover, on every thing, became not only severe, but somewhat menacing. Every shroud, back-stay, and preventer, was as taut as a bar of iron, and the chain-cable that led to the anchor planted off abeam, was as straight as if the brig were riding by it in a gale of wind. One or two ominous surges aloft, too, had been heard, and though no more than straps and slings settling into their places under hard strains, they served to remind the crew that danger might come from that quarter. Such was the state of things, when Spike called out to "heave and pull," that he might take a look at the condition of the wreck.

Although a great deal remained to be done, in order to get the schooner to float, a great deal had already been done. Her precise condition was as follows: Having no cabin windows, the water had entered her, when she capsized, by the only four apertures her construction possessed. These were the compa-

nion-way, or cabin doors; the sky-light; the main-hatch, or the large inlet amid-ships, by which cargo went up and down; and the booby-hatch, which was the counterpart of the companion-way, forward; being intended to admit of ingress to the forecastle, the apartment of the crew. Each of these hatch-ways, or orifices, had the usual defences of "coamings," strong frame-work around their margins. These coamings rose six or eight inches above the deck, and answered the double purpose of strengthening the vessel, in a part, that without them would be weaker than common, and of preventing any water that might be washing about the decks from running below. As soon, therefore, as these three apertures, or their coamings, could be raised above the level of the water of the basin, all danger of the vessel's receiving any further tribute of that sort from the ocean, would be over. It was to this end, consequently, that Spike's efforts had been latterly directed, though they had only in part succeeded. The schooner possessed a good deal of sheer, as it is termed; or, her two extremities rose nearly a foot above her centre, when

on an even keel. This had brought her extremities first to the surface, and it was the additional weight which had consequently been brought into the air, that had so much increased the strain, and induced Spike to pause. The deck forward, as far aft as the foremast, and aft as far forward as the centre of the trunk, or to the sky-light, was above the water, or at least awash; while all the rest of it was covered. In the vicinity of the main-hatch there were several inches of water; enough indeed to leave the upper edge of the coamings submerged by about an inch. To raise the keel that inch by means of the purchases, Spike well knew would cost him more labour, and would incur more risk than all that had been done previously, and he paused before he would attempt it.

The men were now called from the brig, and ordered to come on board the schooner. Spike ascertained by actual measurement how much was wanted to bring the coamings of the main-hatch above the water, until which was done pumping and baling would be useless. He found it was quite an inch, and was at a great loss to know how that inch should be obtained.

Mulford advised another trial with the handspikes and bars, but to this Spike would not consent. He believed that the masts of the brig had already as much pressure on them as they would bear. The mate next proposed getting the main boom off the vessel, and to lighten the craft by cutting away her bowsprit and masts. The captain was well enough disposed to do this, but he doubted whether it would meet with the approbation of "Don Wan," who was still ashore with Rose and her aunt, and who probably looked forward to recovering his gunpowder by means of those very spars. At length the captain hit upon a plan that was adopted.

This plan was very simple, though it had its own ingenuity. It will be remembered that water could now only enter the vessel's hold at the main-hatch, all the other hatchways having their coamings above the element. The carpenter proposed, therefore, that the main-hatches, which had been off when the tornado occurred, but which had been found on deck when the vessel righted, should now be put on, oakum being first laid along in their

rabbetings, and that the cracks should be stuffed with additional oakum, to exclude as much water as possible. He thought that two or three men, by using caulking-irons for ten minutes, would make the hatch-way so tight that very little water would penetrate. While this was doing, he himself would bore as many holes forward and aft as he could, with a two inch auger, out of which the water then in the vessel would be certain to run. Spike was delighted with this project, and gave the necessary orders on the spot.

This much must be said of the crew of the Molly Swash—whatever they did in their own profession they did intelligently and well. On the present occasion they maintained their claim to this character, and were both active and expert: the hatches were soon on, and, in an imperfect manner, caulked. While this was doing, the carpenter got into a boat, and going under the schooner's bows, where a whole plank was out of water, he chose a spot between two of the timbers, and bored a hole as near the surface of the water as he dared to do. Not satisfied with one hole, however, he bored

many, choosing both sides of the vessel to make them, and putting some aft as well as forward. In a word, in the course of twenty minutes the schooner was tapped in at least a dozen places, and jets of water, two inches in diameter, were spouting from her on each bow, and under each quarter.

Spike and Mulford noted the effect. Some water doubtless, still worked itself into the vessel about the main-hatch, but that more flowed from her by means of the outlets just named was quite apparent. After close watching at the outlets for some time, Spike was convinced that the schooner was slowly rising, the intense strain that still came from the brig producing that effect as the vessel gradually became lighter. By the end of half an hour there could be no longer any doubt, the holes which had been bored within an inch of the water, being now fully two inches above it. The auger was applied anew, still nearer to the surface of the sea; and as fresh outlets were made, those that began to manifest a dullness in their streams were carefully plugged.

Spike now thought it was time to take a look

at the state of things on deck; here, to his joy, he ascertained that the coamings had actually risen a little above the water. The reader is not to suppose, by this rising of the vessel, that she had become sufficiently buoyant, in consequence of the water that had run out of her, to float of herself. This was far from being the case; but the constant upward pressure from the brig, which on mechanical principles tended constantly to bring that craft upright, had the effect to lift the schooner as the latter was gradually relieved from the weight that pressed her toward the bottom.

The hatches were next removed, when it was found that the water in the schooner's hold had so far lowered as to leave a vacant space of quite a foot between the lowest part of the deck and its surface. Toward the two extremities of the vessel this space necessarily was much increased, in consequence of the sheer. Men were now sent into the hatchway with orders to hook on to the flour-barrels, a whip having been rigged in readiness to hoist them on deck. At the same time gangs were sent to the pumps; though Spike still depended for

getting rid of the water somewhat on the auger —the carpenter continuing to bore and plug his holes as new opportunities offered, and the old outlets became useless. It was true this expedient would soon cease, for the water having found its level in the vessel's hold was very nearly on a level also with that on the outside. Baling also was commenced, both forward and aft.

Spike's next material advantage was obtained by means of the cargo. By the time the sun had set, fully two hundred barrels had been rolled into the hatchway and passed on deck, whence about half of them were sent in the light-house boat to the nearest islet, and the remainder were transferred to the deck of the brig. These last were placed on the off-side of the Swash, and aided in bringing her nearer upright. A great deal was gained in getting rid of these barrels; the water in the schooner lowered just as much as the space they had occupied, and the vessel was relieved at once of twenty tons in weight.

Just after the sun had set, Señor Don Juan Montefalderon and his party returned on board.

They had stayed on the island till the last moment at Rose's request, for she had taken as close an observation of everything as possible in order to ascertain if any means of concealment existed, in the event of her aunt, Biddy, and herself quitting the brig. The islets were all too naked and too small, however; and she was compelled to return to the Swash, without any hopes derived from this quarter.

Spike had just directed the people to get their suppers as the Mexican came on board. Together they descended to the schooner's deck, where they had a long but secret conference. Señor Montefalderon was a calm, quiet, and reasonable man; and, while he felt as one would be apt to feel, who had recently seen so many associates swept suddenly out of existence, the late catastrophe did not in the least unman him. It is too much the habit of the American people to receive their impressions from newspapers, which throw off their articles unreflectingly, and often ignorantly, as crones in petticoats utter their gossip. In a word, the opinions thus obtained are very much on a level in value with the thoughts of

those who are said to think aloud, and who give utterance to all the crudities and trivial rumours that may happen to reach their ears. In this manner we apprehend, very false notions of our neighbours of Mexico have become circulated among us. That nation is a mixed race, and has necessarily the various characteristics of such an origin, and it is unfortunately little influenced by the diffusion of intelligence which certainly exists here. Although an enemy, it ought to be acknowledged, however, that even Mexico has her redeeming points. Anglo-Saxons as we are, we have no desire to unnecessarily illustrate that very marked feature in the Anglo-Saxon character, which prompts the mother stock to calumniate all who oppose it, but would rather adopt some of that chivalrous courtesy of which so much that is lofty and commendable is to be found among the descendants of Old Spain.

The Señor Montefalderon was earnestly engaged in what he conceived to be the cause of his country. It was scarcely possible to bring together two men impelled by motives more distinct than Spike and this gentleman. The

first was acting under impulses of the lowest and most grovelling nature; while the last was influenced by motives of the highest. However much Mexico may, and has, weakened her cause by her own punic faith, instability, military oppression, and political revolutions, giving to the Texans in particular, ample justification for their revolt, it was not probable that Don Juan Montefalderon saw the force of all the arguments that a casuist of ordinary ingenuity could certainly adduce against his country; for it is a most unusual thing to find a man any where, who is willing to admit that the positions of an opponent are good. He saw in the events of the day, a province wrested from his nation; and, in his reasoning on the subject, entirely overlooking the numerous occasions on which his own fluctuating government had given sufficient justification, not to say motives, to their powerful neighbours to take the law into their own hands, and redress themselves, he fancied that all that has occurred was previously planned, instead of regarding it, as it truly is, as merely the result of political events, that no man could have foreseen, that

no man had originally imagined, or that any man could control.

Don Juan understood Spike completely, and quite justly appreciated not only his character, but his capabilities. Their acquaintance was not of a day, though it had ever been marked by that singular combination of caution and reliance that is apt to characterize the intercourse between the knave and the honest man, when circumstances compel not only communication, but, to a certain extent, confidence. They now paced the deck of the schooner, side by side, for fully an hour, during which time the price of the vessel, the means, and the mode of payment and transfer, were fully settled between them.

"But what will you do with your passengers, Don Esteban?" asked the Mexican pleasantly, when the more material points were adjusted. "I feel a great interest in the young lady in particular, who is a charming señorita, and who tells me that her aunt brought her this voyage on account of her health. She looks much too blooming to be out of health, and if she were, this is a singular voyage for an invalid to make?"

"You don't understand human natur' yet, altogether, I see, Don Wan," answered Spike, chuckling and winking. "As you and I are not only good friends, but what a body may call *old* friends, I'll let you into a secret in this affair, well knowing that you'll not betray it. It's quite true that the old woman thinks her niece is a pulmonory, as they call it, and that this v'y'ge is recommended for her, but the gal is as healthy as she's handsom'."

"Her constitution, then, must be very excellent, for it is seldom I have seen so charming a young woman. But if the aunt is misled in this matter, how has it been with the niece?"

Spike did not answer in words, but he leered upon his companion, and he winked.

"You mean to be understood that you are in intelligence with each other, I suppose, Don Esteban," returned the Señor Montefalderon, who did not like the captain's manner, and was willing to drop the discourse.

Spike then informed his companion, in confidence, that he and Rose were affianced, though without the aunt's knowledge. That he intended to marry the niece the moment he

reached a Mexican port with the brig, and that it was their joint intention to settle in the country. He added that the affair required management, as his intended had property, and expected more, and he begged Don Juan to aid him, as things drew near to a crisis. The Mexican evaded an answer, and the discourse dropped.

The moon was now shining, and would continue to throw its pale light over the scene for two or three hours longer. Spike profited by the circumstance to continue the work of lightening the schooner. One of the first things done next was to get up the dead, and to remove them to the boat. This melancholy office occupied an hour, the bodies being landed on the islet, near the powder, and there interred in the sands. Don Juan Montefalderon attended on this occasion, and repeated some prayers over the graves, as he had done in the morning, in the cases of the two who had been buried near the light-house.

While this melancholy duty was in the course of performance, that of pumping and bailing was continued, under the immediate

personal superintendence of Mulford. It would not be easy to define, with perfect clearness, the conflicting feelings by which the mate of the Swash was now impelled. He had no longer any doubt on the subject of Spike's treason, and had it not been for Rose, he would not have hesitated a moment about making off in the light-house boat for Key West, in order to report all that had passed to the authorities. But not only Rose *was* there, and to be cared for, but what was far more difficult to get along with, her aunt was with her. It is true Mrs. Budd was no longer Spike's dupe; but under any circumstances she was a difficult subject to manage, and most especially so in all matters that related to the sea. Then the young man submitted, more or less, to the strange influence which a fine craft almost invariably obtains over those that belong to her. He did not like the idea of deserting the Swash, at the very moment he would not have hesitated about punishing her owner for his many misdeeds. In a word, Harry was too much of a tar not to feel a deep reluctance to turn against his cruize, or his voyage, however much either

might be condemned by his judgment, or even by his principles.

It was quite nine o'clock when the Señor Montefalderon and Spike returned from burying the dead. No sooner did the last put his foot on the deck of his own vessel, than he felt the fall of one of the purchases which had been employed in raising the schooner. It was so far slack as to satisfy him that the latter now floated by her own buoyancy, though it might be well to let all stand until morning, for the purposes of security. Thus apprized of the condition of the two vessels, he gave the welcome order to "knock-off for the night."

END OF VOL. I.

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